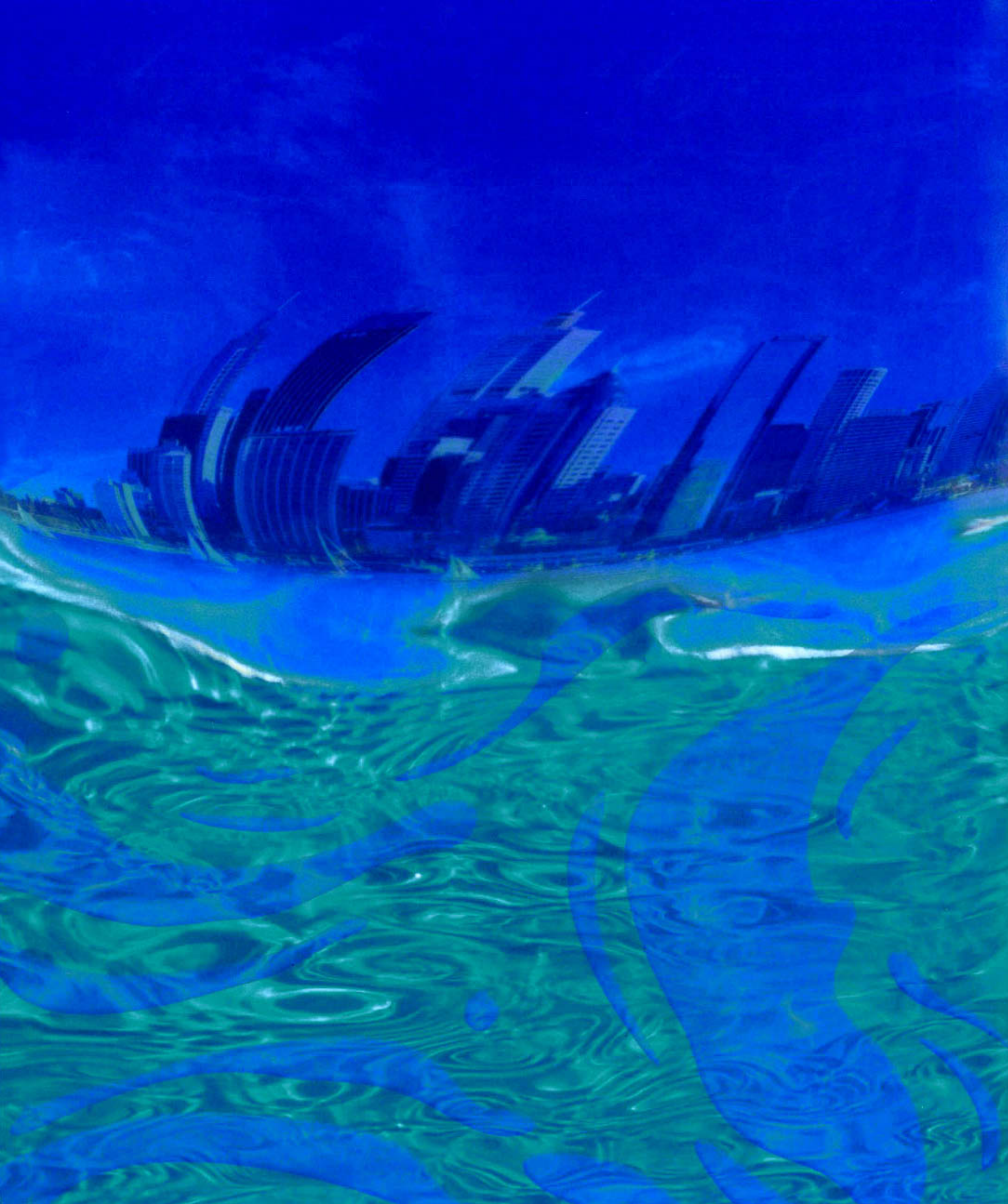




CELEBRATING THE GAMES









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VOLUME TWO
CELEBRATING THE GAMES



SYDNEY 2000 OLYMPIC GAMES
15 SEPTEMBER- 1 OCTOBER 2000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 ONE SYDNEY: A PROFILE PAGE 4 The Olympic City

2 TWO JOURNEY OF THE FLAME PAGE 22 The Olympic Torch Relay

THREE 3 THE GAMES UNFOLD PAGE 50

Opening Ceremony	□ 52	Day 9	□ 92	Day 10	□ 96
Day 1	□ 60	Day 2	□ 64	Day 11	□ 100
Day 3	□ 68	Day 4	□ 72	Day 13	□ 108
Day 5	□ 76	Day 6	□ 80	Day 15	□ 116
Day 7	□ 84	Day 8	□ 88	Closing Ceremony	□ 124
Day 12	□ 104	Day 14	□ 112	Day 16	□ 120

LIFE IN THE VILLAGES PAGE 130 Olympic Villages 4 FOUR

FIVE 5 THE COMPETITION PAGE 140

Aquatics	□ 142	Archery	□ 156	Hockey	□ 232	Judo	□ 236
Athletics	□ 160	Badminton	□ 172	Modern Pentathlon	□ 240	Rowing	□ 244
Baseball	□ 176	Basketball	□ 180	Sailing	□ 250	Shooting	□ 256
Boxing	□ 184	Canoe/Kayak	□ 190	Softball	□ 260	Table Tennis	□ 264
Cycling	□ 196	Equestrian	□ 206	Taekwondo	□ 268	Tennis	□ 272
Fencing	□ 212	Football	□ 216	Triathlon	□ 276	Volleyball	□ 280
Gymnastics	□ 220	Handball	□ 228	Weightlifting	□ 288	Wrestling	□ 294

THE CULTURAL OLYMPIAD PAGE 300 Olympic Arts Festivals 6 SIX

SEVEN 7 EDUCATION AND FRIENDSHIP PAGE 312 The Olympic Youth Camp

APPENDICES

Acronyms	□ 320
Credits	□ 322





1

SYDNEY : A PROFILE





THE OLYMPIC CITY

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Games began with a beat of the constant pulse of energy that has always marked the host city. As the Opening Ceremony got under way, great throngs of Australian stockhorses pounded into the stadium with their riders, their hooves creating an insistent rhythm. This was nature's power in action, and it awed and enchanted the onlookers with its stirring spectacle.

An Ancient Life Force

Sydney's first peoples venerated the energy of the wild creatures in their world. They saw in it an ancient life force, a manifestation of the creative powers of the spirits of the land. And they chose to live their lives in a way that echoed the rhythms of the land, the energy of its creatures. Today, in modern, highly populated, multicultural, traffic-filled Sydney, the ancient rhythm of the land's energy is often subdued, but it still pulses strongly beneath the surface.

The life force is everywhere in the city – a city that extends from the ocean deep into the bush. It comes from the very edge of the land, from the sea, from the steady forward thrust of waves onto rocks and beaches along Sydney's vast foreshore, which extends over 240 km.

It comes from the depths of the ocean, whose colourful creatures were the main food source for the first peoples of this place, over 30 000 years ago. The Eora people who lived around the harbour area were deft fisherfolk, taking their catch from the rocks and the shallows, and from canoes on the waves. Many Sydneysiders still practise this ancient craft, though their vessels have changed and the need for their catch is less urgent.

When the first Europeans settled around the shores of the harbour at the end of the eighteenth century they watched the first peoples at work and began the long process of learning the rhythm of the land.

In 1770 the English naval lieutenant James Cook, captain of the *Endeavour*, sailed into the bay he named Botany Bay, and raised the Union Jack at a point now known as Kurnell. It has numerous hotels and an oil refinery, with Sydney's international airport nearby – a very different prospect to the uninterrupted bushland that was the home of the Dharawal people when Cook arrived. The newly discovered land was ignored by the British until 1786, when America, now independent, could no longer be used as a repository for British convicts, and another venue was required for a penal colony.

In 1788 Captain Arthur Phillip, commanding the First Fleet, rejected Botany Bay for its swampy, windy character and

sailed northward, entering the gap between North Head and South Head. There he delighted in the sight of what he called "the finest natural harbour in the world". His praise has been echoed many times over.

Sydney, Australia's oldest city, is located where it is because Phillip saw the possibilities of settling the people in the First Fleet on the shores of the harbour, particularly after he found a freshwater stream running into it from a swamp in an area later named Hyde Park. Sydney Harbour as the world knows it today is a general description for all the waterways inside the Heads and includes Port Jackson, the Parramatta River, the Lane Cove River, Middle Harbour and North Harbour.

A Life of its Own

The Eora, the first people of the region, called the harbour area Warrane, or Weerong. Phillip called the cove he sailed into Sydney Cove, in honour of Lord Sydney, Secretary of State for the colonies. The name was meant to designate only the harbour area. The penal colony the British had come to create was originally intended to be given the name New Albion, after the ancient poetic name for Britain. But the place took on a life of its own. Within a few years, the name Sydney was being used for the whole settlement, and the landing place at the cove was called Semi-Circular Quay, the Circular Quay of today.

Like its unplanned name, much of the city evolved with its own energy, a vitality that has seen it grow from harbourside into bushland and expand into a city of over 4 million – around one-fifth of Australia's total population. The biggest

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



1. Sydney's Harbour extends 20 km inland, at once a transport hub for commuters on ferries and water taxis, a working harbour for freighters and a playground for thousands of sailors, swimmers and lovers of watersports in general
2. Arthur Phillip, captain of the First Fleet, lands on Botany Bay in 1788 with 759 convicts and military personnel in tow



2

AUSTRALIAN PICTURE LIBRARY

The Olympic City

Volume Two
Chapter One



3. Citizenship ceremonies are held every year on 26 January, Australia Day

4. A migrant family from England arrives in Sydney in 1961. More than half of today's population in Sydney was born overseas and over 200 languages are spoken here

5. Opposite page: The harbour is the centre of attention during the start of the Sydney to Hobart yacht race. Each Boxing Day, thousands gather to see the boats leave the safe waters of Sydney Harbour to embark on the often treacherous journey to Hobart

city in Australia and the most sprawling in the world, it covers an area of about 12 000 sq km, bordered by Palm Beach in the north, the Royal National Park in the south, the coastline in the east and the Blue Mountains in the west.

In the past 200 years many peoples have come to the shores of this vibrant land, bringing with them new life in the form of their varied cultures. The first were migrants from Great Britain, coming in the early days as convicts and later as free settlers. They arrived at a place with a population of some 3000 Aborigines – the Eora people around the harbour, the Dharug people in the north and the Dharawal in the south. To their numbers Phillip's First Fleet contingent added around 1100.

It was an uneasy association. The traditional owners of the land, dispossessed of their home, succumbed to the diseases brought by the Europeans, including smallpox. The introduction of the white man's alcohol also took its toll, and their numbers shrank with alarming swiftness.

The number of settlers multiplied steadily, however. In 1842, with a population of more than 30 000, Sydney was declared a city. With a gold rush, the development of the Stock Exchange, the introduction of trains for transport and bridges to extend the city, and the building of the first university, Sydney was transformed. By 1925 it was a metropolis with a population of one million.

More came to its shores as the national government began encouraging massive immigration from Europe after World War II. Until that time, Australia's European population was predominantly of English and Irish background. About one-fifth of all foreign-born Sydneysiders today are



PHILIP COURKWOULIGHT

from Great Britain and Ireland. The next largest group are New Zealand-born, including people of Maori and Pacific Islander background.

People from southern Europe form around one-quarter of Sydney's population today. Around 500 000 Italians migrated to Australia between 1947 and 1980. More moved to Sydney than anywhere else, enchanted by the city's almost Mediterranean weather and latitude. Over 30 years, there were one million new arrivals from southern Europe. Most spoke Italian, Greek or a Yugoslav language.

In the 1970s, the immigration program expanded to include the Middle East and Asia. Today people from South-East Asia comprise around five per cent of Australia's total population, and 15 per cent of the overseas-born population. They come predominantly from Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia. People from north-eastern Asian countries – China, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea and Japan – make up around 12 per cent of the total population, with people from China forming the biggest group. Chinese migrants first arrived in the early 1800s, and then came in large numbers during the gold rushes. In the past few decades, many Chinese people have migrated to Australia for social, financial and political reasons, and Sydney has attracted the largest intake.

Other large groups have come from Spain, Lebanon, the Netherlands, India, Germany, Croatia, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Macedonia, Turkey and Korea. In all, people from around 180 nations live in Sydney.

Large numbers come as students to Sydney's universities and other educational institutions from China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan and South Korea. Students come also from other Asian countries, Europe, the Americas, Africa and the Pacific countries. Many return as immigrants.

Today, only around one per cent of the population of Sydney is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. The land's first people have been forced to witness many attempts to change their culture and way of life, and their numbers have dropped through disease and despair. In recent times the movement for Reconciliation between Aborigines and those who came to their land has strengthened. Many aspects of the city's undertakings, including Olympic Games planning, have focused on Reconciliation and the need for Aboriginal people to take up their proper role as significant stakeholders in the city and its activities.



MITCHELL LIBRARY/STATE LIBRARY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

A Major Energy Centre

The harbour was the gateway to Sydney for the first new settlers, and for many of those who followed. It continues to be the city's major energy centre. It is Australia's busiest port. Working vessels and leisure craft ply its waters side by side. These daily activities reflect the duality of the city's focus on both hard work and leisure.

The working harbour is a busy one – and it has always been this way. The first peoples caught much of their food here, and the European settlers brought with them many other forms of activity, with the focus on exports. First shipments of wood, and later whale and seal products and wool, were carried along its waterways from loading docks and warehouses. The navy lay at anchor there to overhaul its ships, and sent them out in time of war. Passenger ships landed thousands of migrants on the docks.

Today freighters from around the world load and unload their cargoes at the wharves. Tankers pump out at the oil terminal at Gore Cove. Cruise ships come and go. Private tour and charter boats moor at Darling Harbour. Water taxis bustle their fares to the city and to harbourside restaurants. Ferries and jet-cats based at Circular Quay transport thousands of workers morning and evening – one of the more pleasurable ways of commuting.

Others are taken on pleasure trips on the ferries, on excursion and party boats. Yachts, cruise ships, replicas of ships from colonial times and pleasure cruisers carry out-of-town visitors and other sightseers. Small fishing craft on the water at sunset echo the activity of the oldest inhabitants.

Circular Quay, the Sydney Cove area, is a hub of energy on its shores as well as in the water. Buskers – musicians, clowns and mime artists – perform, and a didgeridoo player sounds his steady beat against the cries of children and seagulls and the hooting of the ferries. At the end of the Quay, picnickers sprawl on the vivid green lawns of the Royal Botanic Gardens, bright against the white sails of the Opera House.

Sydneysiders, lovers of sport and competition, exercise with vigour on the harbour. Sailing races have been held there since Governor Macquarie's time. Canoes and kayaks traverse the Parramatta River most days of the week. The Flying Eighteens, the 18-foot dinghies of the Sydney Flying Squadron, skim exuberantly across the harbour waters. They are the world's fastest single-hulled craft of their size. The world's only ferryboat races are held here annually. The Sydney-Hobart yacht race, starting every year on Boxing Day, draws an international crowd as the 200 or more competing yachts line up for the start.

On other craft – surfboards, windsurfers, surf-skis, jet-skis, kneeboards and boogieboards – Sydneysiders and visitors catch the wind and the waves.

Symbols of Ceaseless Motion

Above the harbour there are other signs of human busyness. The Sydney Harbour Bridge is crossed by some 200 000

vehicles daily. At the time of its construction, during the worldwide depression of the 1930s, it was called the 'bridge of our dreams', giving employment to well over a thousand men and linking parts of the city formerly separated by its many waterways. Today during grand celebrations the Bridge seems magical, a vision once more as it is gilded about with showers and waterfalls of light to celebrate its beauty and its position of honour as one of Sydney's most famous icons.

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



DANIEL WAEGERS/COCOS

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



JASON BUSCHWILDLIGHT



PAUL A. SOUTHERS/CORBIS

6. Swimming is a national sport and Sydneysiders of all ages enjoy the multitude of pools and beaches to choose from

7. Bushwalking and strolls by the seaside are a favourite pastime for many Sydneysiders

8. Although no-one has been injured by a shark in Sydney waters for years, the occasional unwanted visitor does find its way into Sydney Harbour. Since 1791, Sydney has been witness to 83 shark attacks

9. Surf Lifesaving is a way of life in a country where 83 per cent of the population live within 50 km of the waterfront. Surf Lifesaving Australia involves 269 clubs and in excess of 82 000 members who carry out an average of 12 000 rescues a year



JEFFREY L. ROTUNDO/CORBIS

The Harbour Bridge and Sydney's other major bridges – Gladesville, Lane Cove, Iron Cove, Pyrmont – are symbols of the city's ceaseless motion. From many places a bridge can be seen, decorating the skyline with a delicate tracery and asserting human domination of the landscape.

The sky above the harbour is also the scene of human domination: it is intersected by the inner city monorail, noisy hordes of commercial aircraft, colourful hot air balloons and even the giant-sized slogans of skywriters.

A Spirit of Life in the Landscape

It is not only the harbour that entices the people of Sydney to physical activity. There is a spirit in the other landscapes of this city that urges its people outdoors. They flock to its lovely open spaces, its natural gathering places. They go in their tens of thousands to fairs and free open-air concerts at the Domain and other venues to hear music from the full spectrum of pop, classical, opera, jazz, rock and children's favourites.

Sydney's famous beaches are busy almost year-round: Sydney is by and large a city of sunshine – around 3000 hours a year. The weather, usually temperate, sometimes

intensely hot in the summer, is a great incentive to spend time at the beach.

There is great variety of choice for beach lovers – there are about 125 beaches, both harbourside and oceanside. Friends can meet at surfing beaches, bays safe for family swimming complete with shark nets, nudist beaches, beaches with grassed picnic and play areas, and beaches fringed with cafes and surf shops. Busy Manly, with its Corso and covered wharf with shops and stalls nearby, has visitors to its beaches and their environs even in poor weather. Bondi Beach, the closest ocean beach to the city, has attracted crowds for over a century. It is popular for its many eating places, from take-away fish-and-chip shops to up-market restaurants, with a wide range of cuisines on offer. It is a giant gathering place, the venue for concerts, New Year's Eve crowds intent on celebrating, and the Olympic Games beach volleyball events. Australia's first surf club was founded here in 1906. The surf clubs hold surf-lifesaving classes for all ages, and regular carnivals. Bilgola, Narrabeen, Maroubra – the musical names of some beach areas, Aboriginal in origin, echo the rhythm of the waves falling.

The city's ten National Parks are astir with the sound of wildlife. Snakes and lizards twist their way through the undergrowth, cockatoos exult about the seeds they find and kookaburras share a joke with their mates. Throughout the Parks, and in reserves and scattered places in the built up areas, Aboriginal rock engravings, burial sites, shelters, middens, fish traps and wells celebrate nature and tell of human relationship to the land. At La Perouse, Aboriginal arts and crafts are on display, and the uses of traditional foods, medicines and weapons are taught.

City dwellers gather in groups and relax with vigour in the wildness and tranquillity of the parks and reserves. They play cricket and barbecue at Lane Cove National Park, fish and



GRAHAM MONRO/AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION

picnic at the Georges River National Park, walk from the Spit Bridge in Middle Harbour to Manly, and take scenic walks through the Rocks, location of the first convict settlement. They walk at South Head, wander along the clifftops from Bondi to Coogee, and picnic at West Head, taking in the water vistas and the wallabies, fish, boomerangs and birds in the natural gallery of Aboriginal art on the rocks. In the Royal National Park on the city's southern border, people hire canoes and rowing boats, swim, walk, camp and picnic.

Sydneysiders are preoccupied with the weather, as it affects two of their most loved pursuits – just being outdoors, and playing sport. The possible antics of the fickle weather are the cause of much speculation, and the prognostications of weather forecasters anxiously awaited.

Though Sydney skies are regularly a deep blue, this is also a city of sudden outbursts from the elements. Heavy winds, fog, torrential rain and the odd hailstorm can all affect a sporting event or a day out. The city has been subjected to various natural disasters – fierce bushfires, wild storms, localised flooding. Sydneysiders, many of them volunteers in emergency services, turn out cheerfully for other people's crises.

Dynamism on Land

This is a city of dynamism on land as well as on water. If the city's dwellers are not taking their leisure in outdoor places, they are expending their energy on sportsfields. Like most places in Australia, Sydney is a city of intense interest in sport, of great enthusiasm for both playing and spectating, its citizens following the rituals and contests with fervour and devotion.

Football in its various forms, surfing and sailing are most popular. As the city was built on the more protected waters of the harbour, it took the population a while to arrive at the pleasures of surfing. But once surfing was discovered it was embraced with this city's usual enthusiasm for something new. And this enthusiasm hasn't tired. Rugby and soccer are played even by small children. Rugby league has the biggest crowd following. Cricket, netball, touch football, Australian Rules football, basketball and tennis are all popular. The annual calendar of sporting events also lists competitions in the indoor versions of tennis, cricket and soccer, gymnastics, polo, wheelchair racing, regattas, motorbike racing, car racing, international lawn bowling, horseracing, as well as the Sydney to Wollongong Bike Ride, quarter horse championships, the Bridge to Bridge water-skiing, volleyball tournaments, surf-lifesaving carnivals, the Sydney Marathon and shorter distance runs, and Grand Prix sailing. Exercise brings people together daily. In Centennial Park, the city's 220 ha green heart created to commemorate the centenary of the founding of the colony, joggers, cyclists, horseriders, walkers and in-line skaters daily make the 4 km circuit in their hundreds. There are strong feelings attached to all sports here. Car bumper stickers and appropriately coloured clothing bear witness to long-term team loyalties.

The 14 km City to Surf run, from the city to Bondi Beach, draws more than 50 000 serious runners and keen walkers annually. Like all major Sydney events, it is a day of friendly,



10

TANYA LAKETHE AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW

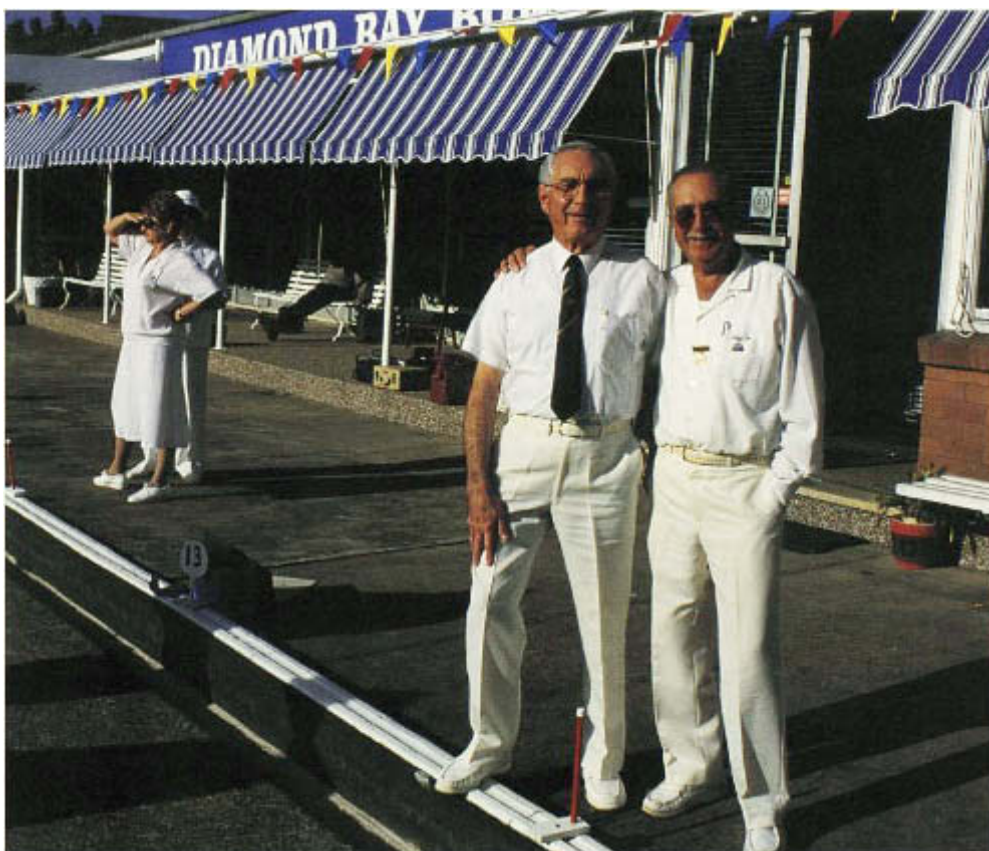
exuberant crowds. Thousands line the race route, with bands, fancy dress, words of encouragement and a cool down from the garden hose for race participants all being part of the fun.

Even the built environment is drawn into the world of exercise. Each year there is a race up the 1385 steps to the top of the AMP Tower, the tallest building in the Southern Hemisphere.

In a city that values excitement, there are 11 racetracks. Gambling is very popular, and licensed clubs have as their background music the whirr of numerous poker machines. A shuttle bus traverses the length of the city several times a day, carrying gamblers to the Star City Casino, opened in 1997.

10. Every year, 50 000 people gather to participate in the 14 km City to Surf run, which has been held for 32 years

11. Involvement in sports and outdoor activities is not limited to the young. Lawn bowling is particularly popular with the elderly and played around the country



11

ANDREW STEPHENSON/ILLUSTRATION

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



12. Horseracing enjoys great popularity in Sydney and a day at the races is always a welcome excuse to dress up and enjoy the atmosphere

13. Sydney's summer season features a great variety of outdoor entertainment. On a large screen at Mrs. Macquarie's Chair, movie lovers follow the Australian short film festival

14. Art plays a vital role in the life of Sydneysiders. An opening at the New South Wales Art Gallery draws crowds for a Jeffrey Smart exhibition

12



NEWSPIX

Energies of the Mind

While sporting prowess is highly valued, the city abounds in the energies of the mind and the artistic spirit too. Sydney is a city of cultural societies: it is reported to have four ballet troupes, 12 orchestras, 15 resident chamber music groups, 30 musical societies, 29 repertory companies and six choral societies. There is a huge range of live music venues. Pubs and clubs introduced much of Australia's popular music talent to the world. Jimmy Barnes, INXS, Midnight Oil and AC/DC, among many others, gave their first performances here.

Sydney is a cultural centre. The city is the base for Australia's film and TV school, and all the television networks. It is the country's movie capital as well. Sydney's most famous cultural icon, the Sydney Opera House, conjures up many images – a ship in full sail, a flower unfurling, a creature from the sea – on its perch at Bennelong Point. This area is named to commemorate an Aborigine kidnapped by Governor Phillip,

who became a favourite of the British leader. Bennelong lived here in a hut, but today the large concert halls showcase Australian ballet, opera and drama. The Opera House is busy at all times of day, with concerts in the foyers as well as the main halls, and visitors taking refreshment at its food outlets. Audiences fill the steps outside, to picnic or to watch open-air concerts or film screenings. This is a city that loves the visual splendour of a show of any kind. Its people are accustomed to the abundance of nature's spectacular displays – a lilac sunset, gigantic gums in a dense green forest, the shadow-play of ships on the harbour at night.

The Sydney Opera House is an example of the successful integration of overseas ideas into the fabric of the city, bringing new life to the whole. The design by Danish architect, Joern Utzon was selected as the winner of an international competition for a grand opera house for Sydney. Building began in 1959, and was completed in 1973. This shining thing, seemingly poised for flight on the tip of the land, is regarded as one of the great buildings of the twentieth century, and in its position on Sydney Harbour in front of the Harbour Bridge has become one of the best-known images of the city.

This is a city of film festivals, of theatre, of music, of art. It is a visual city, a city of strong colours vibrating with exuberance. There is the almost uninterrupted intense blue of the sky, the vivid green-blue of the harbour's waters, the glowing green of lawns suffused with sunlight in the Botanic Gardens, the Domain and the public parks in the suburbs, the vivid reds and yellows, purples, blues, pinks and greens of hibiscus and flame tree, jacaranda and bougainvillea, parrots and cockatoos and lorikeets, offset by the white blur of seagulls overhead and the intense earth colours of red brick

13



MICHELLE MOSSOP/THE AUSTRALIAN

14



ANDREW STEPHENSON/WILDLIGHT

homes and terracotta roof tiles. Giant dabs of neon fluoresce at night in the city centre, forming a counterpoint to night skies awash with gold during the frequent large-scale displays of fireworks that heighten the spectacular quality of Sydney's celebrations. Sydney is a painting by the hand of a tireless artist, one who is never satisfied, always seeking to embellish further a canvas rich in dynamic elements.

It is a city whose visual elements are frequently transformed into works of art. Its many galleries display Aboriginal works, art from colonial days, the works of contemporary Australian artists, photographs of the city as it is and was, and international artworks from many sources.

Changing the Built Landscape

Another form of transformation, that of the built landscape, takes place unceasingly in this restless city. Sydney was Australia's first city, constructed by the convicts sent from England. Since then its appearance has been both marred and embellished by the visions of architects, builders and developers from scores of different backgrounds. Like its name and its location, the city itself was unplanned, and its current form is current only today. Tomorrow a new house will be added, a new development conceived or an old one renovated – and neighbours anxious to retain their views or their trees or their patch of sun, or heritage committees anxious to retain elements of socio-historical value, will staunchly combat any changes.

No grand vision for the city was ever successfully imposed. Phillip envisaged a city with its principal streets 60 m wide, but its buildings came to line much narrower routes. Other visions of plazas, wide thoroughfares and geometrically arranged streets have been proposed over the past 200 years. In the 1930s, it was even suggested that a great fire would be the best solution for a cityscape as haphazardly laid out as it had become. Martin Place in the city centre, originally an old cross-town street and now closed to traffic, is a popular gathering place for lunchtime workers, with its sunken stage, broad pedestrian area crossing several of the main city streets, flower stalls, half-price ticket booth and news-stands.

Some other parts of Sydney show signs of earlier visions of scale. The plan for Parramatta in the west was originally devised by Lieutenant William Dawes from the First Fleet. He laid out a grid system of five wide streets, with a main highway running from Government House to the Parramatta River, and another ending in a plaza with a town hall. Institutions of church and state were to be placed around this. Some of this symmetry is still visible today. Daceyville in the south-east was the first planned state-designed suburb, with a pattern of ovals and squares. Building began in 1912, and many of the charming brick and wood bungalows remain.

Olympic Boulevard, the main thoroughfare at Sydney Olympic Park, is the widest and longest pedestrian roadway in the city. It carried tens of thousands at a time during the Olympic Games, its grand proportions giving the crowds the sense of being one with a vast group with a mutual peaceful purpose.

Sydney is a city of active groups each driven by its own vision where individual styles, eras, ethnicity and cultural norms

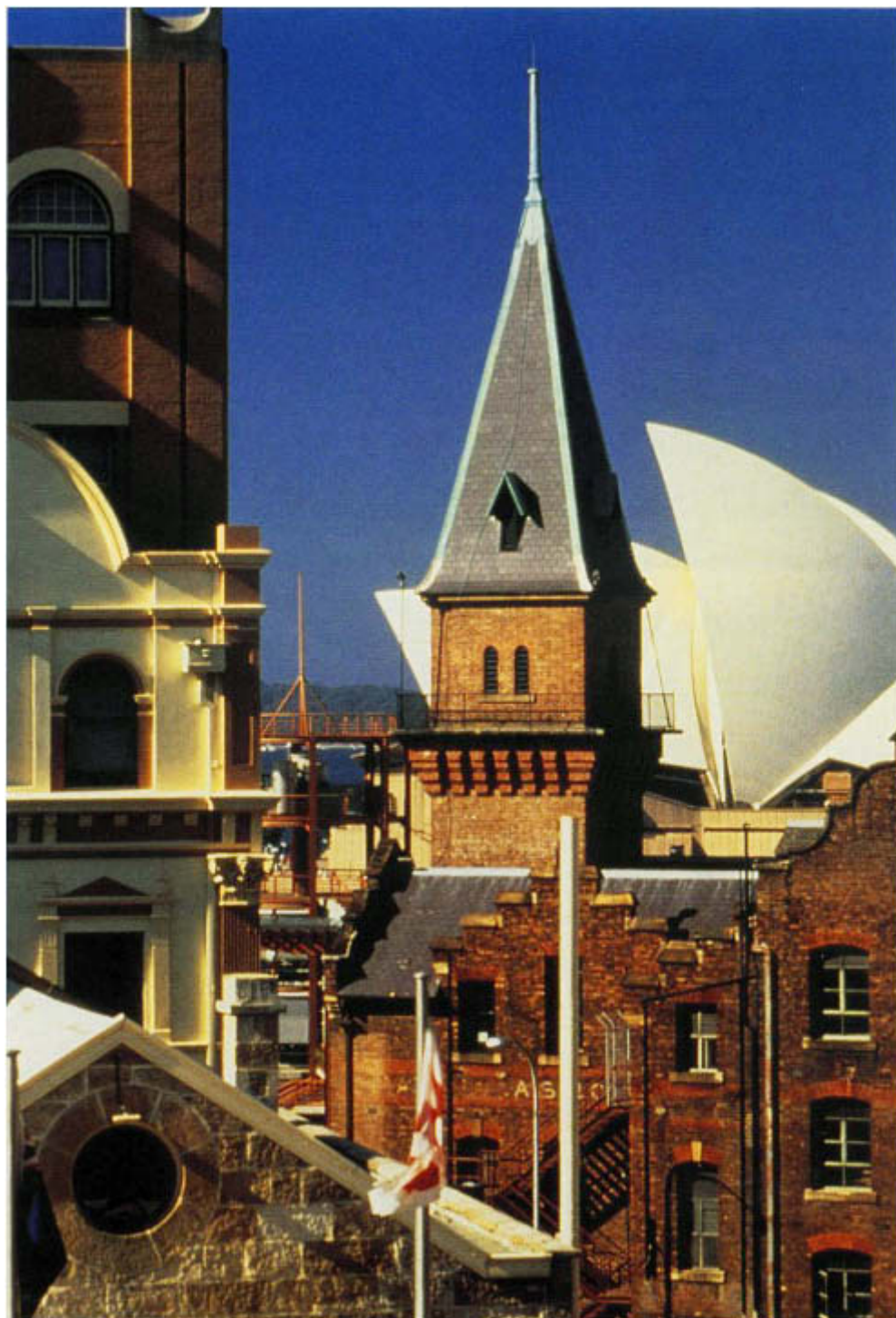
have all had some effect upon the built landscape. The worthy citizens of the Victorian era provided a degree of uniformity in some of the major buildings they constructed – the Town Hall, Customs House, Government House. Even here, however, a form of hybridisation was hard at work. Government House has Gothic features; the Town Hall, as its legacy from 11 architects, has buttresses, domes and architraves in a flourish of styles; and next door, the grand, ornate, intricate Queen Victoria Building, the city's largest shopping centre, has both domes and roof pavilions.

The city centre is flanked by a line of grand buildings – Macquarie Street's Old Parliament House, Sydney Hospital, the old Treasury Building, the Sydney Conservatorium – and then the eye travels with a hop, a skip and a jump over an assortment of steel, concrete and glass buildings of varying styles and proportions.

The Olympic City Volume Two Chapter One



15. Sydney's architecture stands witness to the different epochs in architecture. The Rocks, Sydney's oldest quarter features renovated warehouses, narrow lanes and historic buildings, now housing restaurants, shops and galleries



15

N COHEVAUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



- 16. *Paddington terrace houses are a typical sight in Sydney's inner city areas, creating a unique village atmosphere*
- 17. *Sydney is characterised by its sprawling suburbs where proud home owners look after their front lawns and houses*

16



JASON BUSCHWILDIGHT

Until 1957, building height was restricted to a maximum of 150 feet, around 45 metres, but Sydney's people have succeeded in dominating the skyline with their buildings as they have with their bridges. Since that year, towers built for architectural effect could exceed the height limit. And exceed it they do.

The structure of the land itself lends itself to constant flux. There are no straight lines in this landscape of rocky hills and valleys. Streets wind and twist, and staircases or tiny lanes often link two streets. The harbour, with its many bays and inlets, further restricts uniformity of development. Though the city has leapt further and further inland, the CBD, clinging to the harbour, has hardly expanded since the last century. The blocks of land for individual houses, however, have shrunk in size over the years as Sydneysiders have relentlessly pursued the Australia-wide dream of home ownership. The traditional quarter-acre block with house and garden has made way in many areas recently for dual occupancies, townhouses shoulder to shoulder and high-rise apartment blocks. Inner city warehouses are being divided into apartments as the new notion of urban consolidation takes hold. Turn-of-the-century terrace houses and semi-detached cottages are becoming more and more popular, with land size a crucial factor in this most expensive of Australian cities, its median house prices the highest in the country. Here real estate is a constant preoccupation, the subject of a substantial portion of the daily and weekend newspapers.

In their search for homes of their own, many of the people of Sydney have moved away from the expensive city centre. Suburbs sprawl for over 50 km west, north and south of the harbour. It is a great irony that land ownership was anathema to the first peoples of this place, whose primary concern was not portioning out the land but instead making all aware of their common obligation to respect it. At the time of European settlement of Sydney Cove, elaborate and intricate ceremonies

were being conducted at the many sacred sites around the region, teaching codes of conduct and responsibility, particularly in relation to the land and its bounty.

Housing ranges widely in character, from suburb to suburb and within suburbs themselves. Some very large and very expensive homes hover at the edge of the harbour and along the coastline, high priced because of the premium attached to harbour and water views. Other areas, such as parts of the North Shore, have gracious old homes set in elaborately designed gardens. The terrace houses of the old inner city suburbs such as Glebe and the Rocks are adorned with fancy ironwork known as Sydney lace. The outer suburbs are more distinctively Australian, containing mostly bungalows built of lightweight materials, and red-brick homes with red terracotta roofs, each on its own block of land.

Parramatta was the earliest satellite settlement, west of Sydney, home to the colony's first free settlers. Called Rose Hill originally, it reverted later to its Aboriginal name, which means 'where the eels jump or lie down'. For some time at the end of the eighteenth century it was bigger than Sydney itself. Today the city's demographic centre is supposed to be here, the 'capital' of the western suburbs, some 24 km inland from Circular Quay. It is a significant part of the metropolis, far more than a satellite now. Parramatta has Homebush Bay, site of Sydney's Olympic development, close by. It also has the oldest public building still standing in Australia, Old Government House, remnants of the first bath house and the first observatory, and the site of Australia's first vineyard.

With its spontaneous bursts of development and change, Sydney has often been described as a work in progress. But there are some areas with signs of carefully planned developments, in suburbs such as Haberfield in the inner west, Burwood in the west and Kensington in the south-east. And Homebush Bay is perhaps the most carefully

17



PHILIP QUIRKWILDIGHT



18

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



NICK WILSON/ALLSPORT

planned area of all. The Olympic Games has added a collection of sporting venues and facilities to the area, and has seen a complete overhaul of infrastructure.

A long road, reflecting the relentless quest for home ownership of the city's dwellers, leads ever westward. At the turn of the nineteenth century the first real road in Australia led to Parramatta. Today Parramatta Road is lined by countless car dealerships and fast food outlets. The suburbs through which it passes can often seem uniform and unchanging in aspect, but Sydney is a place of cities within a city. Each suburb has its unique character, and corresponding pride on the part of its inhabitants. Many books have been written about the history of individual suburbs, reinforcing the sense that each is a unique, idiosyncratic enclave.

Sydney is a place where people from the most varied of backgrounds and beliefs have converged, and the resultant combination has had the explosive effect on the landscape of a fervent chemical reaction. The city's landscapes bear witness to the range of religious, eating and shopping habits and community structures of their inhabitants.

Suburbs such as Camperdown, Haymarket, Kensington and Randwick have large settlements of young Asians because of their proximity to universities. In other suburbs people from the same cultural backgrounds often choose to live close together, creating areas rich in the characteristics of that culture. There is Little Spain in Liverpool Street, Little Italy in Leichhardt, Little Turkey in Auburn; the Seoul of Sydney is found in Campsie in an area of Korean foodstores and restaurants; Little Portugal is in Petersham. Lebanese Christians cluster around the Maronite Church in Redfern. Auburn is the heart of the Arabic community, and Cabramatta home for the Vietnamese. Each of these areas has foodstores and restaurants that reflect the tastes of its people.

Most of the city's Aboriginal population is found in the inner suburbs of Redfern, Waterloo, Woolloomooloo and Glebe, and in suburbs of the outer west and south-west. People from China, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea and Japan live in the inner west, south-west, southern North Shore, city centre and Chinatown, which is an area with traditional pharmacists and supermarkets carrying only Asian products. Every second shop in Chinatown is a restaurant, and people from all over the city go to eat there. There is a wide range of regional Chinese cuisines represented, from Beijing in the north to Guangdong province in the south.

18. A large percentage of Sydney's Aboriginal community lives in Redfern. Valerie Murphy, an Aboriginal rights activist, poses in front of her house with her granddaughter

19. The influence of Asia is never far away. Asian restaurants and festivals with their exotic foods and flavours are popular among Sydneysiders



19

TOURISM NEW SOUTH WALES

20



A large gay population has been attracted to the city, centred mainly in Darlinghurst and Newtown. Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras started in 1978 as a small protest march against oppression, and is now a major annual parade with a series of cultural events in the preceding month. The Mardi Gras attracts a crowd of around 800 000 each year, and is the biggest gay parade in the world.

Some areas have an eclectic mix of cultures. King Street in Newtown, 4 km south-west of the city centre, is a hub of cultural activity. It was first a farming community, and is now a centre for alternative art and ethnic restaurants. Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Middle Eastern, African, Polish, Thai and Serbian cuisines are all available.

There are ethnic media in abundance in this city of many tongues. Special Broadcast Services (SBS) TV and Radio offers free-to-air television and radio broadcasts in most major languages. There are newspapers and magazines in almost every language as well, keeping readers in touch with their countries of origin as well as Sydney events.

This city of many peoples is a place of religious diversity and freedom. The skyline is filled with a composition of curves and straight lines from the domes and spires of the cathedrals, churches, chapels, mosques, synagogues and temples of most of the world's religions.

A Spirit of Renewal

The development of the Olympic Games venues and the Olympic Village, with the focus on regeneration, reflects the interest of many Sydneysiders in regenerating and renewing the city of which they are so proud.

Sydney's citizens are vocal in their attempts to retain the natural beauty of their city. They have launched campaigns to save pieces of bushland on rivers and beachfronts. They have raised public awareness about issues such as a non-polluting light rail system as a transport alternative. They raised fears about the environmental and financial effects of an undertaking as vast as the Olympic Games. Planners and designers took these factors into account.

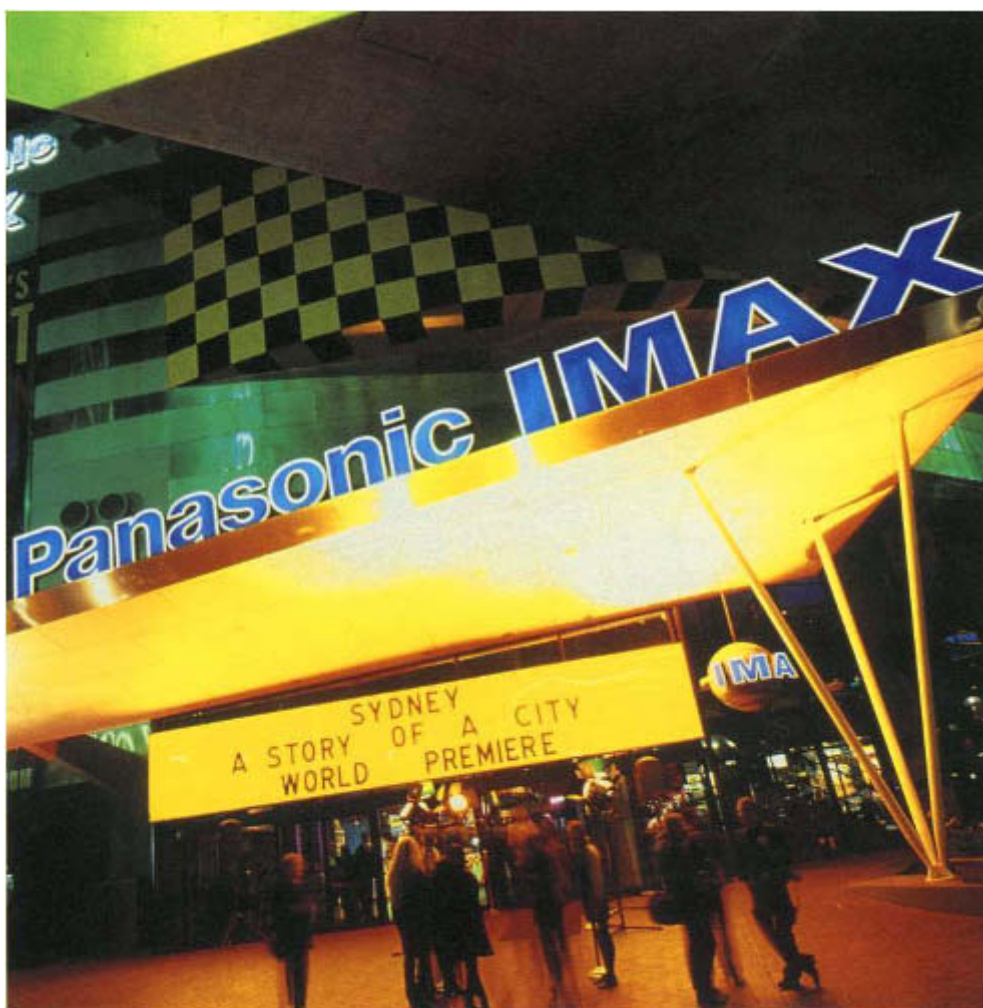
Clean Up Australia Day, an annual event devoted to removing litter dumped by the thoughtless, was initiated in 1989 as a mass clean up of Sydney Harbour and grew to encompass the whole country. From this lead, other community actions have followed with requests for government support to match local initiatives. Many works aimed at cleaning Sydney's waterways have resulted. Others are making spirited attempts to reduce air pollution and air traffic noise.

'Green bans', inaugurated by Jack Mundey, leader of the Builders' Labourers Federation, in the early 1970s, persuaded many not to work on projects damaging to Sydney's built heritage and natural environment.

There have been some rigorous redevelopments, however, on the grand scale typical of Sydney. The Rocks, the oldest urban quarter in the city, formerly run-down and notorious for its crime-ridden alleys, has been carefully restored. Its

TOURISM NEW SOUTH WALES

21



HAMILTON LINDA AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION

22



MICHAEL AMENDOUANE/SPIX

attractive sandstone terrace houses, interspersed with cafes, restaurants, pubs, galleries and specialist shops, form a tourist precinct popular with Sydneysiders and visitors.

The Darling Harbour complex on the city centre's western edge was once the main dock area, a utilitarian place of work. It was smartened up as a major project for the Bicentennial, which celebrated 200 years of European settlement, and this and subsequent developments have given it an almost exhausting range of possibilities. It has amusement parks, museums, shopping precincts, clubs and restaurants, a theme park, an IMAX movie theatre, convention and exhibition centres, and a beautiful Chinese garden, a gift for the Bicentennial from Guangdong province in 1988 and a symbol of friendship between China and Australia.

But the biggest redevelopment has been the creation of Sydney Olympic Park at Homebush Bay. This 760 ha waterfront area in the demographic heart of Sydney offered enormous opportunities to planners with vision.

It is a site of major environmental significance. Before European settlement, extensive tidal wetlands and thick woodland covered the area, first known as 'the Flats'. Aborigines used it extensively as a meeting ground for the tribes from the mountains and the coast.

A few years after the British established their colony in Sydney, the area was settled by a number of the first free men and women to take up land – hence the name given at the time, 'Liberty Plains'. Settler D'Arcy Wentworth acquired 370 ha of land, and lived in what he called his 'home in the bush'. Years later this name had stuck, and 'Liberty Plains' became 'Homebush'.

By the 1960s the area had been variously used as a racecourse, a brickworks, an armaments depot and an abattoir. It was at its worst by the 1970s, an environmental wasteland, contaminated by the uncontrolled dumping of household and industrial waste. The mangroves and unique flora and fauna were in grave danger.

And so, in the early 1980s, Homebush Bay was earmarked for urban renewal. The success of Sydney's bid to host the Olympic Games hastened its revival. Today, it supports a number of important habitats and different types of vegetation. It is also a groundbreaking site of environmentally sound design, construction and operation.

Speaking for Itself

The vitality of Sydney's people has often inspired them to take up causes. Sydney speaks for itself in more ways than one – not only in terms of its physical beauty. In political terms, the city has evolved from the strict sense of hierarchy endemic to a colony to a city where many have their say. By the 1900s it had become a democratic city, its workforce characterised by trade unions, a city of many opinions. Though the state government has been predominantly Labor since World War II, local governments have fluctuated between Labor and Liberal domination, with the electorate pulled by a complex mix of causes, the force of leaders' personalities and fixed loyalties. And the force of republicanism began to grow in the 1980s as Australians stopped calling Britain home, lost their first enchantment with all things American and began to desire a separate nation to suit their strongly individual identity.

Sydney is a place where people think for themselves. Letters to the press with strongly worded opinions proliferate. Indeed, the newspapers encourage this lively exchange of views.

A love for life – of fun and festivity – runs parallel to Sydneysiders' concerns with serious causes. Sydney's people are

The Olympic City

Volume Two
Chapter One



20. Opposite page: For the annual Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, hundreds of thousands line the streets to enjoy the exuberant party atmosphere

21. Opposite page: The new urban development at Darling Harbour attracts locals and tourists alike, featuring an Imax theatre and a range of dining options

22. On Clean Up Australia Day, held annually, young volunteers look for rubbish at Lady Bay

23. Hyde Park is the venue for clashes on a giant chess board, with men gathering there daily to play or watch



23

TONY YATES/WILDLIGHT

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



24



JACKY GHOSSEIN/THE SUN HERALD

24. Sydney's CBD hosts a variety of street parades each year. Cultural and sporting achievements are celebrated, giving the community a chance to get up close to their heroes
25. A surfer at Bondi Beach passes a huge kite, ready to fly at the Festival of the Winds, another annual event on Sydney's calendar

keen celebrators – they love a good party, a good parade, a good demonstration. In a city of such cultural diversity there is always something to rejoice about. Among many other things, Sydney hosts each year a Children's Day organised by Koreans, a Tibetan Fair, Afghan New Year's Day, the South American Music Festival, the Latin Film Fest, Chinese New Year, the Norton Street Festival (Italian), St Patrick's Day and Indonesian Independence Day. Multicultural festivals proliferate too. There is Carnivale, the celebration of multi-ethnic talent and diversity, with more than 200 events, including film festivals, music, theatre, food and art exhibitions. The Festival of World Dance includes dances from Scotland, Hungary, Greece, Poland, the USA, India and Romania. The Festival of the Nations offers music, games,

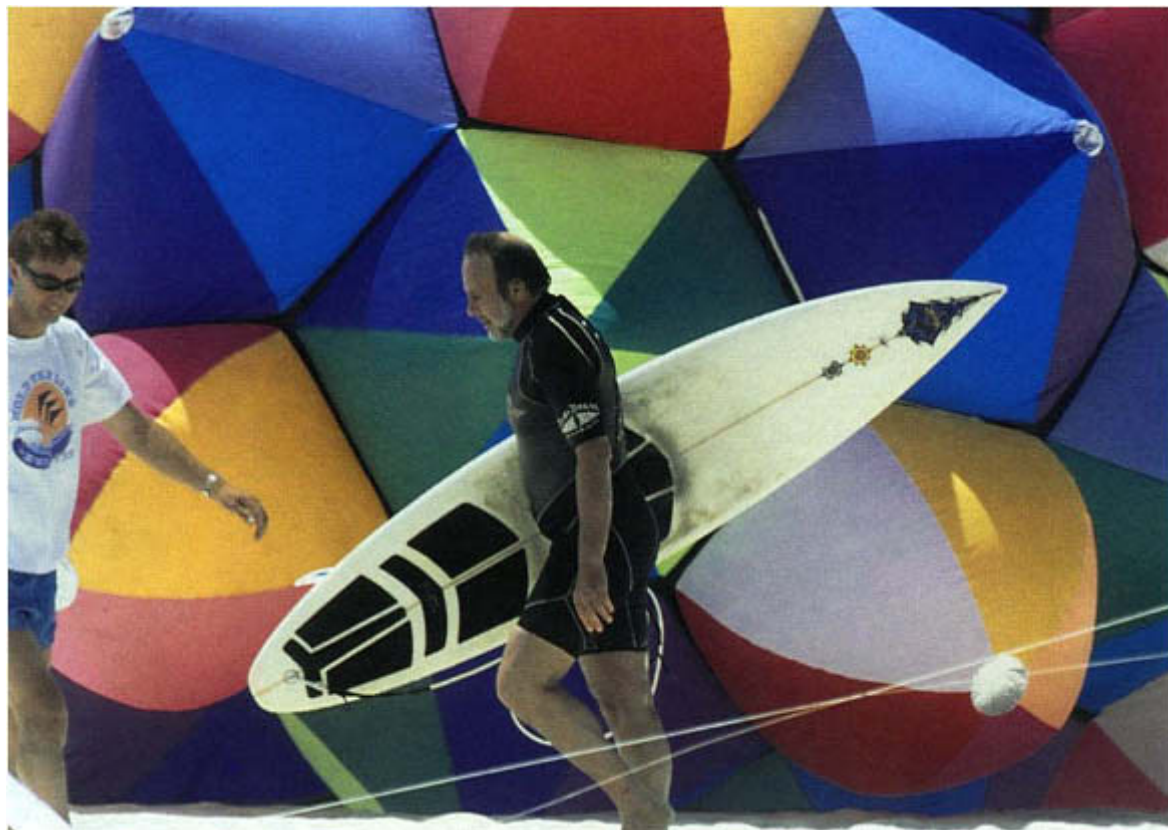
food, song and dance. Voices from Oceania is a showcase of Pacific Island music and culture. The Sydney Biennale is an international exhibition of contemporary art. Suburbs celebrate too: there is the Bondi Environmental Festival, the Blacktown City Festival, Castle Hill's Orange Blossom Festival, the South Sydney Festival, and many more.

But it is Sydney's harbour that is the focus for most city-wide celebrations. The new Queen of England was greeted on its shores in 1954. In 1988, the 200th anniversary of European settlement, the grand-scale Bicentennial celebrations brought one and a half million to its shores. Every year, thousands farewell sailors at the start of the Sydney-Hobart yacht race in December, and every New Year is welcomed in with a great burst of fireworks over the water. The fireworks displays reflect the magic of a city whose only constancy is that it is always changing.

A Sense of Adventure

Sydney is a city always high on adrenaline. In a place where changes abound and so many aspects of life are celebrated, excitement is always in the air somewhere. The proximity of the bush engenders a sense of adventure – a sense that a stirring contrast exists to life in a sophisticated urban environment. It is a sense that exalts, and makes the moment close to the edge something to treasure. Sydney has many areas of natural protected bushland, pockets of wildness in built up places. These areas, and the many beaches, and theme parks such as Australia's Wonderland, offer an alluring promise of adventure: big waves on the surf beaches, snakes in the bush, fruit bats, bluebottles, stingrays, and shark-attack stories to satisfy the most ghoulish – though the actual incidence of dangerous events is extremely small. Perhaps some of the sense of an unknown close by lingers from the early days of settlement. The settlers moved inland with trepidation through bush the likes of which they had never seen, coming upon creatures wholly unknown, even as the Aboriginal dwellers trod smoothly in counterpoint, at one with the land and its creatures.

25



JULIAN ANDREWS/THE SUN HERALD

The sense of threat lingers also in the memories of the many overseas wars in which the city's people have been involved, and there are mementos enough to reinforce these: war memorials, fortifications, forts and artillery pieces.

A Fervour of Pride

Sydney's people are united in a fervour of pride in their city. This is a self-conscious city, proud of its own beauty and its diversity, its vibrancy and sophistication, ever aware that outsiders are always here to have a look. Sydney has many business visitors from abroad and tourists from other parts of Australia and overseas. In the Olympic year of 2000, 4.94 million overseas visitors came to Australia, an increase of almost half a million on the previous best year. New Zealand, Japan and Great Britain were the biggest contributors. In a number of travel magazine surveys, Sydney has been voted the world's most desired holiday destination.

This is a city proud of the ingenuity that has resulted in the construction of two of its three major icons – the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House.

It is a place of discovery. Sydney has produced an intriguing combination of sporting, intellectual, environmental and work-



26

DAVID SIMMONS/AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



related firsts. The world's first postage stamps featuring views instead of portraits were issued here in January 1850 – with Sydney landmarks as their images. In 1879, the Royal National Park at the city's southern border became the world's first gazetted national park. In 1951, the New South Wales Government offered the first long service leave in the world – three months after 20 years. The first official world surfing championships were held at Manly Beach in 1964. This was the first city in the world to appoint female police officers – two of them – in 1915. The world's first beauty contest in which contestants were judged in swimsuits was held at Maroubra Beach in 1920.

26. A fruit and flower stand at the Rocks Market attracts people with its colours and tastes. Open air markets are held in many suburbs, with fresh produce, arts and crafts and clothes for sale
27. Rock pools on Sydney's 37 beaches have a dedicated following with swimmers braving the cold waters even during the winter months



27

ROBERT PEARCE/THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



28



28. Comedians Roy Slaven and HG Nelson entertained the city during the Olympic Games with their creation "Fatso", the fat-arsed wombat
29. A chef takes a break from his work in front of his shop in inner Sydney

It is a place that encourages curiosity. The city's wide range of multicultural offerings is always on display, in exhibitions, streets of food stores, markets, festivals and shows. Its museums, such as the Powerhouse Museum and the Australian Museum of natural history, the National Maritime Museum and the Museum of Sydney, promote discovery of the city's ancient roots and current treasures.

It is a city of the do-it-yourselfer, full of sheds and workshops. It is a city of renovation, a place where proud owners stamp their own brand of individualism on their homes, for many their most important possession.

It is a city able to laugh at itself. Nightly television panel shows and satires show the irreverent attitude of Sydneysiders towards many 'sacred cows' – politicians, football players, male-female relationships, the arts, and even the Olympic Games.

It is a city with a zest for large-scale activities – concerts, festivals, demonstrations, the annual Royal Easter Show, New Year celebrations and the culminating party for millions, the 2000 Olympic Games.

It is a city of rapid and incessant communication. There is a highly sophisticated telecommunications network, and a high proportion of the population owns mobile telephones.

Money is always on the move in Sydney, Australia's major financial centre. The majority of foreign banks operating in the country have their headquarters here. About half of Australia's biggest companies are based in Sydney, its multicultural and multilingual characteristics well suited to the increasing internationalisation of business and communication. It is known in some areas as the business headquarters of the Asian basin. It is an intellectual centre. It is a city of advanced technology.

This is a city of hard workers, with many working long hours. Tradespeople and clerical, sales and service workers form the largest employment groups. There are well over 500 000 people working in a wide range of professional areas, including health, law, engineering, architecture, education, technology and science.

This is also a city of the good life, where its residents make a serious effort to enjoy the fine things on offer and make the most of their often limited leisure time. They gamble more than other city dwellers in Australia. They travel more, consume more. And they embrace new trends with alacrity, giving each one its hour of glory and then seeking out the next novel thing.

Sydneysiders are enthusiastic about food. Eating well, with friends, is a significant part of the culture. There are hundreds

29



JASON BUSCHWILDLIGHT

30



AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION

of choices with the wide range of cuisines on offer. It is hard to imagine now that the European settlers did not have much to eat in the first few years. They brought with them coffee, and fruit and vegetables and livestock, but they were not good farmers and supply ships didn't always arrive when expected. When the Second Fleet arrived in 1790, Australia was dubbed 'the poorest country in the world', where even guests invited to dine with the Governor had to bring their own food.

Since the 1950s and the arrival of the first large group of Italian immigrants, pasta and coffee have been dominant food forms. Coffee has achieved the status of a language of its own, with around 17 terms for different ways of serving it, and formal qualifications for coffee makers. In this sophisticated cafe society, coffee and wine have replaced beer as the drink of choice with a meal. Asian, Greek, French and Middle Eastern cuisines are also popular, and the redevelopment of the fish markets has promoted a love of seafood that goes full circle to the diet of Sydney's first people. With the increasing internationalisation of the city, more and more disparate cooking styles

have been introduced by different cultural groups. Innovative ways of using Australia's native flora and fauna have flourished as well, and Sydney's banquet table grows ever larger.

Sydney is a city of the lavish in other areas too. Shop after shop offers internationally desired designer goods. Fashion is a focus, and even events such as horseracing carnivals present the opportunity for fashion displays.

Sydneysiders have a good time, and they have it in public places. Squares, beaches, pavement cafés, the harbour, parks and sporting venues – all are alive with people. The city's dwellers are out there having a good time in this cheerful city where sophistication runs hand in hand with an unashamed enjoyment of life and a strong sense of pride in their splendid city.

This has never been as much the case as at the time of the 2000 Olympic Games. For much of the preceding decade, Sydney pulled out all the stops to display its talents and achievements to the world. And none of those who were part of the close-packed crowd at Circular Quay in 1993 will forget the single-voiced roar of excitement and affirmation when IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch declared, "And the winner is ... Sydney!"

Sydney is a winner. To a battle with the potentially divisive elements of a sometimes shameful history, a disparate mix of peoples, and the rigours of life in a massive city in a modern age, it has brought its most effective weapons – its sense of excitement and curiosity, its enchanting beauty, the creative power of its multi-ethnicity, and its greatest strength: its ever-pulsing life force.

The Olympic City
Volume Two
Chapter One



30. Outdoor dining and cafes are a relatively recent addition to Sydney's street scenes, but tables and chairs have conquered the city's sidewalks

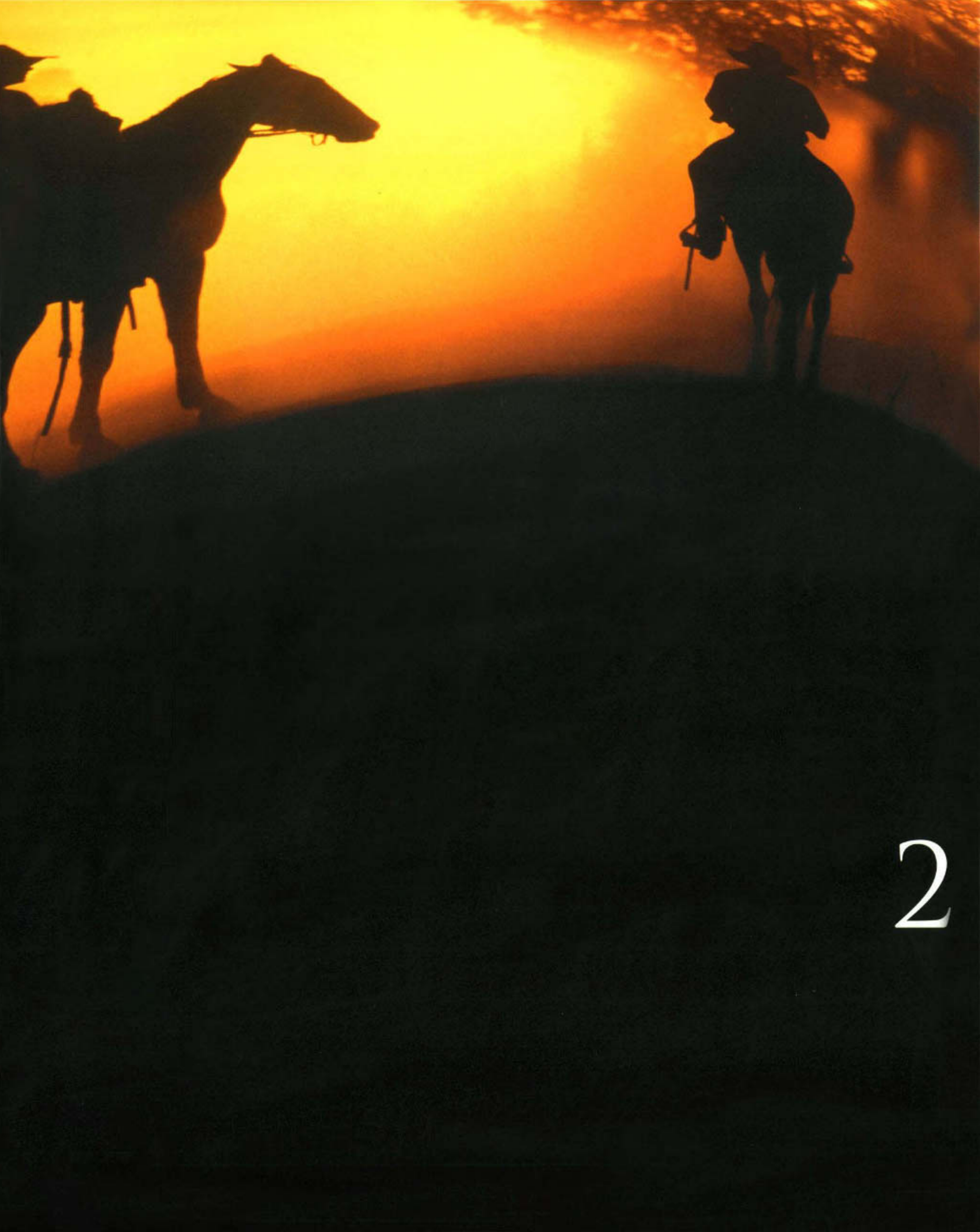
31. Centennial Park offers a green break from the bustling activity on Oxford Street, with rolling greens, lakes and sporting fields

31



PHILIP OURKWILD/LIGHT





2

JOURNEY OF THE FLAME





THE OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY

The torch relay has become the modern Olympic Movement's call to bring together the world's athletes to celebrate their Games. At the same time, the Torch has links to past and future Olympic Games. Passing the flame from one person to another is a symbolic continuation of an ancient tradition of handing down fire from generation to generation.

In 2000, as the Olympic flame travelled first through Greece, then through Oceania and finally around Australia, athletes across the world were beginning to make their way to Sydney for training and to celebrate the Games of the XXVII Olympiad.

Sydney's Olympic torch reflected the values which the organisers regarded as key elements of the Sydney 2000 Games – the egalitarian spirit of Australia, the commitment to Olympism and the motivation of innovation. This Olympic torch drew its inspiration from the Sydney Opera House, the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean and the subtle curve of the boomerang. Its three-layered design represented the elements of earth, fire and water. The fuel system showcased benchmark environmentally friendly technologies.

Greece

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay commenced, as had all relays since their inception in 1936, with a flame-lighting ceremony in a small sacred grove located outside the remains of the Temple of Hera in Olympia, site of the ancient Olympic Games.

Twenty thousand spectators came to see the torch relay begin, packed into Olympia's ancient stadium. An invited group moved from the stadium to stand near the ruins of the Temple of Hera to view the closed lighting ceremony, conducted by 25 priestesses, dressed in full-length tunics, all actors. The high priestess was portrayed by 28-year-old Athens University drama graduate, Thalia Prokopiou. She began by calling to the god Apollo with an ancient Greek prayer, "Apollo, god of the sun and enlightenment, send your rays and light the sacred torch for the friendly city of Sydney."

Then she held a silver torch, with a dry olive branch protruding, to touch a parabolic mirror positioned to concentrate the sun's rays. Sadly, because of a light cloud cover that day, the torch did not ignite and a backup flame that had been lit the day before in full rehearsal was used. A trumpet sounded to signal the lighting, echoed by another back in the ancient stadium.

The flame was transferred to an urn and the priestesses accompanied it to the stadium where the crowd waited in

excited anticipation. Bringing up the rear of the procession was the high priestess carrying the urn of fire, and another priestess carrying an olive branch. The ritualistic ceremony, linking the ancient and the modern Games, continued as the moment the public had waited for approached. The high priestess moved towards a small altar, where the first torchbearer, Greek men's high jump champion Labros Papakostas, waited. She called again to the gods, "Apollo, god of the sun and enlightenment, send your rays and light the sacred torch for the friendly city of Sydney. And you, Zeus, grant peace to all peoples of the world and crown the victorious in these sacred Games." From the flame in the urn the high priestess lit another silver torch, then joined it to one held by Papakostas with the words, "Go forth, oh victorious one. Go forth."

Papakostas turned to the cheering crowd, holding the torch high in his right hand and an olive branch in his left, before setting off to run the length of the ancient stadium. He ran 700 m of his originally scheduled 1 km run, as the last 300 m had been allocated by the Hellenic NOC to IOC Vice-President Kevan Gosper's daughter Sophie. She thus became the first Australian torchbearer for these Games. Her choice created controversy back in Australia, where it became front-page news. In the wake of a tempestuous year for the IOC it was perceived to be a favour given to an IOC member's family.

In every Greek town and village that the torch relay passed through on its ten days in the country, the streets were lined with people. The attraction and mystique of the Olympic flame has never been lost on the many who come to see the torch relay every two years on its way to the Olympic Winter and Summer Games. In some villages they threw

The Olympic Torch Relay

Volume Two
Chapter Two



1. After its arrival in Uluru, the torch was passed through the hands of eleven elders the traditional owners of the land, before commencing its 100-day journey around Australia
2. Lambros Papakostas kneels in front of the chief priestess in Olympia. After a special lighting ceremony at the sacred site, the Greek athlete was the first runner to carry the flame toward Sydney



2

MIKE HEWITT/SPORT



flowers at the feet of the torchbearers, in others they lined the streets with carpets from their homes for the torchbearers to run on.

For the first time the torch relay visited some of the Greek islands. A military boat carried the torch entourage and the flame between the islands. The vessel was often joined by a flotilla of smaller craft and fishing boats to guide the torch to their shores. Once on the island, the local relay and festivities were held and at night the flame rested in the host island's town hall.

On 20 May, the torch relay around Greece came to an end at the site of the first modern Olympic Games, the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens. A cauldron was lit from the relay flame, and the Hellenic Olympic Committee President, Lambis Nikolaou, ignited a torch from the cauldron to hand to SOCOG Board Member, the Honourable Chris Hartcher, saying, "I am convinced that the Olympic flame, which has managed to preserve symbolic character through many difficult circumstances, will be able to once more breathe faith into our hearts and revive our love for the timeless principles and values it enshrines."

Oceania

A special charter aircraft operated by the official carrier, Ansett, transferred the Olympic flame in a safety lantern directly from Athens to the Pacific Ocean island of Guam for the commencement of the Oceania segment of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay, arriving there on 22 May.

As the torch relay entered the Oceania region, the sense of the Games' immediacy heightened. The 12 Pacific countries gladly greeting the Torch were alike in the heartiness of their welcome and, as part of Oceania, were for Australia an integral part of the pre-Games celebrations. The Australian Federal Government met the cost of this section of the relay to enable its neighbours to be included. New Zealand's Olympic Committee Secretary-General declared that the people of Australia were, "Showcasing to the world the friendship that exists within the Olympic Family of Oceania".



It was a feast of welcomes as the torch passed from one island nation to another. Traditional singing, chanting and dancing greeted the flame on its journey by canoe, locomotive and royal platform. Strong sunshine and enormous beach parties greeted the torchbearers in the tropical regions. Each day 100 torchbearers bore the flame, and each evening a celebration was held.

In Guam, in addition to the celebrations surrounding the Olympic flame, there was a peaceful demonstration by the Chomorro people in support of Aboriginal land rights and the rights of indigenous people throughout the region. From there, the action moved to Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, then Nauru, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Samoa, American Samoa, the Cook Islands, Tonga and finally New Zealand before the flame arrived in Australia. Fiji had to be bypassed because of the political crisis in that country at the time.



The arrival of the flame was a huge event, for most the only direct contact they would have with the Olympic Games. Public holidays were declared in many places so that all could join in the festivities. In Guam, NOC President Ricardo Blas said carrying the torch was, "One of the greatest moments of my life". A guard of honour paid respect to the Olympic flame. On the island of Palau a special chant greeted the relay team, and there was a prayer for peace and unity for athletes all over the world. The torchbearers on the island included the first to carry the flame in a wheelchair, and an 85-year-old village chief.

Next day, on the island of Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia, thousands of cheering people greeted the torch with choirs, and welcoming signs. They were also celebrating Micronesia's imminent, first-ever participation in the Olympic Games. In the Solomon Islands, tennis champion Lency Tenai said, "Very few people in my country will experience the Olympics, so this was a very special thing for them all".

In the tiny island of Nauru, despite great humidity and soaring temperatures, the people turned out en masse. In Papua New Guinea, the relay visited the Kokoda Trail, one of the world's most significant war sites. Six local tribesmen accompanying the torchbearers had helped sick and wounded Australian soldiers during World War II. In Vanuatu, the first of the day's 100 torchbearers was a chief, accompanied by dozens of children. Large crowds met the torch everywhere with bamboo archways and welcoming signs.

On Day 11, as the relay came to the Cook Islands, the torch passed through a guard of honour of those who had contributed to the Olympic Movement in that country. The first bearer was carried on a royal platform while children sang a traditional chant.

Throughout the torch's passage through Oceania, people wore their traditional costumes and danced their traditional dances, welcoming the relay as an opportunity to celebrate the uniqueness of their cultures. In New Zealand the three days of wholehearted festivities displayed the country's close ties with Australia, and reflected the whole region's pleasure at being able to participate in the excitement of the 2000 Olympic Games.

The torch relay left behind the palm trees and beaches of Tonga on 2 June; next stop was the ski-fields of Queenstown on New Zealand's south island. These were not the popular images of the South Seas, as a suitably rugged-up Peter Snell carried the torch from the helicopter at Coronet Peak. Snell, who won the 800 m at the 1960 Rome Olympic Games and the 800 m and 1500 m double in Tokyo four years later, is one of the most celebrated Olympians. His story has been treated by Olympic filmmaker Bud Greenspan, which in itself is a mark of status. The decisiveness of Snell's wins as recounted in Greenspan's film, the distinctiveness of the New Zealand 'all-black' shorts and singlet, tend to make them stand out, even in a field of Olympic champions.

Snell passed the torch to Annalise Coberger, an Olympic Winter Games slalom silver medallist, who began the descent to the base of the mountain. There the torch was handed to a pair of mountain bikers who sped off to deliver it for a short cruise aboard a jet-cat boat.

New Zealand is proud to be the home of the extreme sport of bungy-jumping and inevitably the unusual pastime played its part in the torch relay. A torchbearer stood by as two jumpers put their faith in the rubber band and leapt from a high platform. After witnessing the recoils and 'thumbs-up' of the jumpers, the relay proceeded, heading for the cathedral city of Christchurch.

The Olympic Torch Relay

Volume Two
Chapter Two



- 3. *Opposite page: The torch is in Guam for a day*
- 4. *Opposite page: A Nauru torchbearer takes the flame to a phosphate mine*
- 5. *Opposite page: Children on the Solomon Islands enjoy the passing torch convoy*
- 6. *Paddy Strain carries the torch down Coronet Peak*
- 7. *The torch visits a bungy jumping platform overlooking Queenstown Bay*
- 8. *A mountain biker takes the torch from Coronet Peak to Queenstown in New Zealand*



6 GREG GARAY/SCCOG



7 GREG GARAY/SCCOG



8 GREG GARAY/SCCOG

The Olympic Torch Relay

Volume Two
Chapter Two

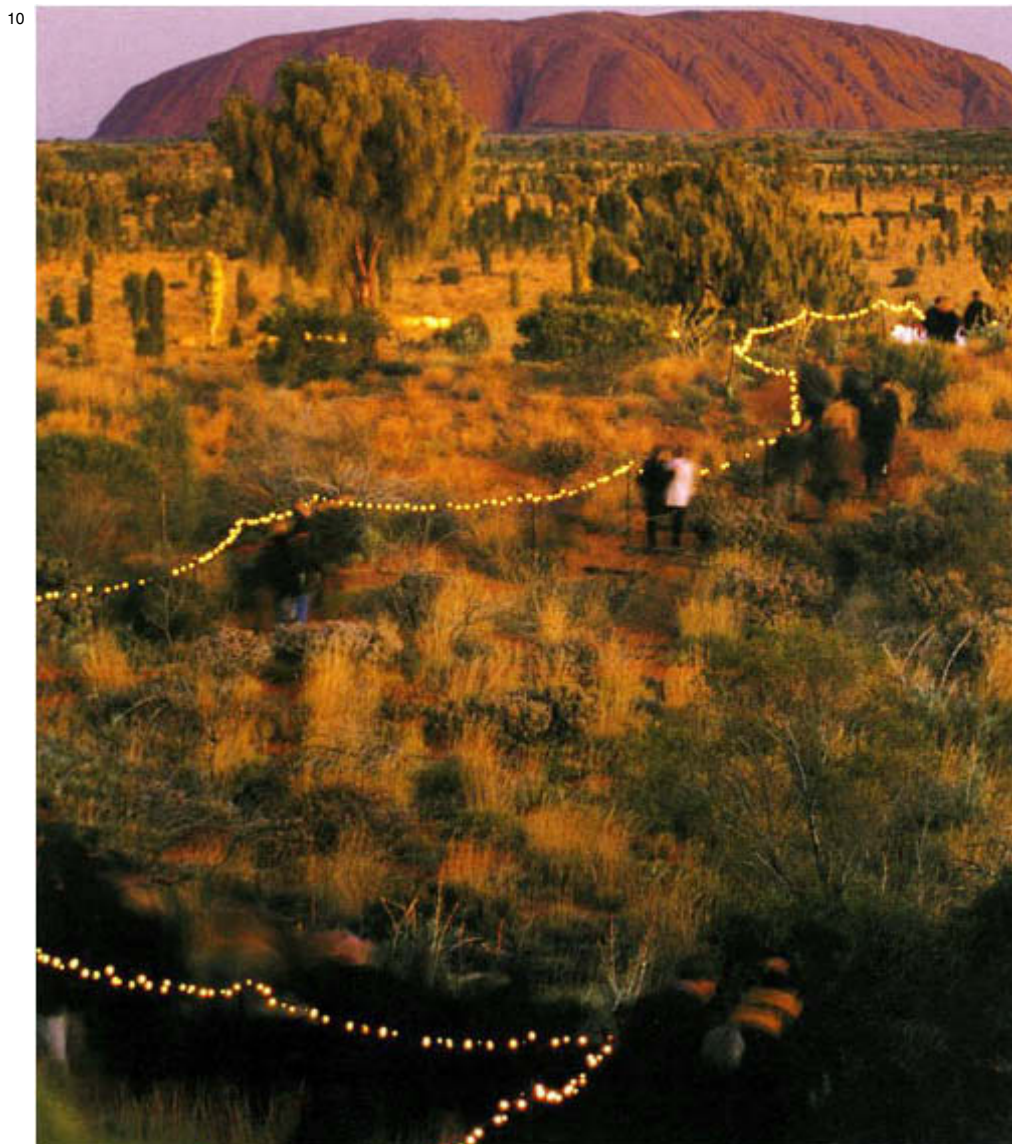


9. The last torchbearer on the torch relay's three-day stint in New Zealand, former Olympian John Walker, lights the cauldron for the evening celebration in Auckland

10. A dinner with a spectacular backdrop is held at Uluru to celebrate the arrival of the Olympic flame in Australia



GREG GARAYVISCOSOG



JOHN HENSHALL/VOYAGES HOTELS & RESORTS

On the morning of 6 June, Day 16, at 10 am the torch reached Wellington Airport. The torch was greeted with a traditional Maori welcome, which with its tongue-poking, glaring eyes and spear-shaking can be rather alarming to the uninitiated. The torch party, however, satisfied the indigenous New Zealanders of their good intentions and were sent on their way to the national parliamentary buildings. There the Prime Minister, Helen Clark, accepted the torch and started off a daylong tour of the New Zealand capital city.

The next day was the last before the torch relay reached Australia. An early start was made and soon after sunrise the convoy approached Rotorua, famous in Australia and New Zealand as a region of steaming lakes, geysers and therapeutic mud pools. School-children as always were enthusiastic observers of the relay and here formed themselves into the shape of the Olympic rings as the torch passed by.

The last stop on the New Zealand leg of the relay was at Auckland, sometimes described as 'the city of sails' for it, like Sydney, enjoys the distinction of a vast harbour. Features of the afternoon included a crossing of the Auckland Harbour Bridge and runs by several prominent New Zealand Olympians including canoeist Ian Ferguson, the winner of four Olympic gold medals – the most by any New Zealander.

In the evening, celebrations took place at the Auckland Museum Domain. New Zealanders prepared to farewell the torch while the relay party made ready for the flight across the Tasman Sea.

Australia

In Australia the torch relay passed within an hour's drive of 85 per cent of the population, travelled over 27 000 kms and was carried by 11 000 torchbearers in the longest torch relay in Olympic history. The Olympic flame travelled by a variety of modes of transport, including a surf boat at Bondi, the Indian Pacific train across the Nullarbor Plain, a Royal Flying Doctor Service aircraft in the remote outback and by camel on Cable Beach at Broome in the north-west of the country. The journey began in Uluru, in the centre of Australia.

Northern Territory

The arrival of the Olympic torch was preceded by an entourage of international media, every move carefully orchestrated by local officials. On the eve of the flame's arrival guests attended a special staging of an award-winning tourist attraction, a 'Sounds of Silence' dinner, hosted by the President of SOCOG and New South Wales Minister for the Olympic Games, the Honourable Michael Knight.

This unique dinner was an eclectic mixture of gourmet canapes and bush tucker, didgeridoos and astronomy, champagne and billy tea. On the edge of the desert, the glow of candles and campfires lighted dignitaries, officials, sponsors, traditional owners and torchbearers as they anticipated the flame's arrival. Beside one campfire, two young Aborigines stood shivering, engaged in conversation. In the morning they were to be among the first to carry the torch. Both were championship football players and role models to their own people and many others.

"How do you feel?"

"Nervous."

"Why would a professional athlete like you be nervous about a short run?"

"Ah, this is different. The other is a team sport. This is an incredible honour for our country."

The Governor-General, Sir William Deane, joined them and enjoyed the campfire camaraderie, surrounded by nothing but desert. Later, everyone departed for an early night, thinking about the roles they would play on the international stage the next morning. After years of preparation and logistics worthy of a military operation, the longest Olympic torch relay in history was about to create its own unique imprint on the host nation, Australia.

On 8 June 2000 the Olympic flame arrived at Yulara, in Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. Announcing Uluru-Kata Tjuta as the first place in Australia to receive the flame, the SOCOG President had declared it important that the site be an instantly recognisable, internationally known symbol of Australia. "Uluru is not only known worldwide but is also a place of immense historical and cultural significance," he

11



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

noted. "It is in the geographical heart of Australia, is of great spiritual significance to many Australians and is part of the outback character of Australians."

There were international press, VIPs and sponsors in attendance, as well as the local community, many of whom stood barefoot. Few guests were prepared for the early morning desert cold and wind, especially those from overseas who were influenced by the images of sun and surf for which Australia is so widely known.

The flame emerged from the flight from New Zealand and was transported from the airport to Uluru by the Governor-General.

Torch officials had negotiated with Uluru's traditional owners for permission to run around Uluru, a sacred site for the local Aboriginal people. The local community was united in its support for the ideals of the Olympic Games and its approval for the Olympic torch to begin its Australian leg here, in the shadow of the world's biggest monolith, Uluru. With the torch passed to Uluru's traditional owners by Sir William, the Olympic torch relay officially began on Australian soil, in the spiritual heart of a land older than the ancient Olympic Games. At precisely 9.08 am on 8 June 2000, Nova Peris-Kneebone, the first Australian Aboriginal to win a gold medal at an Olympic Games, accepted the flame.

When the first Olympic Games to be held in Australia, the Games of the XVI Olympiad, were staged in Melbourne in 1956, there was not a single Aboriginal person on the Australian Olympic team. Now, in 2000, there were 11, one of them the first torchbearer on Australian soil. This choice set the stage for what was to become an underlying theme of the 2000 Olympic Games – Reconciliation between indigenous and white Australia. It was made obvious through the representation of indigenous culture in all ceremonies and in the country's hopes for Aboriginal athlete Cathy Freeman to win a gold medal on the track in the 400 m.

If the Melbourne 1956 Games were a reflection of Australia in that year, the Sydney 2000 Games were to demonstrate how much has changed in the intervening 44 years, and how the nation would like to be perceived throughout the world as tolerant and inclusive. At Uluru on that morning all attention was on Nova Peris-Kneebone, as she stood proud and barefoot, the absence of running shoes a gesture of respect for her people.

Flashing her winning smile for a gold medal media performance of endless shots on cold bitumen, she radiated a warmth that belied the very cold conditions. Slowly she started, then broke into a jog and was joined by her nine-year-old daughter, Jessica. They were a sensational sight profiled against Uluru as the rock loomed large against the background of a crystal-clear day. Peris-Kneebone set the tone for other runners on the Australian leg. "As an athlete, I usually try to run my fastest. But on this occasion I'll be running as slowly as possible to savour the moment and share the Olympic spirit with others," she said.

The arrival of the torch in Uluru was notable for lack of pomp and ceremony, but it took the 'land down under' to the top in the minds of the world's media and claimed the interest of Australians as few other things have done. It also marked a critical point in Australia's Olympic journey. Olympic Minister Knight, said, "Finally the flame is in Australia, now we're totally responsible for the Olympics."

After controversy in the last year leading up to the Games, everyone wondered what the mood of the nation would be as the torch began its journey around Australia – wonder or weariness? The pilot delivering the flame from New Zealand admitted to being one of the cynics. Wary from the flight, he commented, "I must say that when I had the plane on autopilot, I went back to see what all the excitement was about and I had to admit it touches you." As it would touch all of the 11 000

The Olympic Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two



- 11. The flame, while in transit, flies first class in a safety lantern
- 12. The plane with its Olympic cargo arrives in Uluru and Anna Booth, SOCOG Board member, carries the flame off the plane

12



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

The Olympic Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two



2

runners along the way – and all who watched. Whether carried by television personality Ernie Dingo, Wimbledon tennis champion Evonne Goolagong Cawley, who gladly 'broke the rules' and shared her torch with a throng of local schoolkids, or a torchbearer less famous, the flame would light up the eyes of those who saw it. Even on a lonely stretch of road with only a small family group to cheer the local torchbearers on, all were heroes for a fleeting four or five minutes.

As the flame arrived at the local oval for the first of the sponsored lunchtime celebrations, a crowd of 400 gathered for a barbecue of emu and kangaroo. Apart from the VIP party and a sprinkling of indigenous owners, the gathering consisted mainly of backpackers and tourists on caravan trips around the country. In total, 187 lunch or evening celebrations were hosted along the relay route by local councils, sponsor AMP, and SOCOG. Venues included three airports, six car parks, 33 ovals, 64 public parks, 19 street locations, 11 showgrounds and 50 sporting grounds.

What brought this first lunchtime celebration crowd here, awaiting the arrival of the torch in the warmth of midday, comfortably clad in T-shirts? "Nothing much else ever happens here," says a local, as a tourist replies, "We were just lucky to be in the neighbourhood after a 650 km drive through the outback." Whatever brought them there initially, whenever they saw a runner with the torch, they crowded round, asking, "Can I have my photo taken with you? Can I actually touch the torch?"

For each torchbearer, whether known before or known after the Games, this was their fifteen minutes of 'flame'. Even among the toughest cynics, the torch kindled a kinship and ignited a spirit of unity. The moment was best summed up by the champion footballer, no longer suffering from the nervousness of the night before, "Carrying the torch is right up there with winning a Grand Final!"

"There's more security here for the torch than for the Queen of England's visit," proclaimed a local airport worker later in the day, as the aircraft carrying the flame touched down in Alice Springs. Ironically, many throughout this republican-leaning nation would subsequently comment that the arrival of the torch in their town was reminiscent of a royal visit they remembered from their childhood. And indeed, 'the Alice's' torchbearers felt like royalty, as the bulk of the town's 27 000 residents created its first-ever traffic jam.

As local torchbearers happily passed the torch to one and all, many of the children no doubt had a sudden dream of one day becoming an Olympic athlete – and eager little hands all wanted to touch the torch. A teenager happily relinquished her torch to a group of children who excitedly passed it around. A doctor from the Royal Flying Doctor Service did likewise, and after sharing her moment in the light of the torch would take it on her next mercy flight to the Outback.

After passing on the flame, torchbearers could purchase the torch they carried. Many did, making it one of their most prized possessions. Those who had been allocated spots by sponsors flew from all over Australia to take their place amongst the local heroes. As they took their personal torches home, their moments of glory lasted a little longer as eager crew and passengers on the aircraft wanted to be part of the Olympic dream.

Hughen McConaghy, Territorian of the Year, carried his three-day-old daughter when he ran his leg of the relay in Alice Springs. Showing a disdain for the rules, he boldly proclaimed that the baby weighed only slightly more than the torch and he wasn't quite sure which one to hold triumphantly in the air.

In the evening, fireworks lit up the sky and fired the pride of people from miles around, especially the 6000 schoolchildren who had gathered from the surrounding bush for a 'mini

13. The torch relay passes Docker River Road just after it was lit at Uluru on the relay's very first stage in Australia

14. A local torchbearer carries the torch away from Ayers Rock while the torch convoy follows at a distance

13



NICK WILSON/SPORT

14



GREG GARY/SOCOG



GREG GARAY/SCOGG

Olympic Games', a sports carnival with traditional track and field events. The next day the torch left town on a road train convoy, headed back to the airport for its journey into Queensland before returning to the Territory 19 days later.

Queensland

On 9 June, Mount Isa became the flame's first stop in Queensland, when Frank Daisy, a rugby league football legend, became the first to carry the torch in the state. Citizens turned out in droves to greet the flame, the crowds larger than for the mining town's annual rodeo. Like so many towns along the route, Mount Isa's history has both shaped and reflected that of the nation. Last century there were bloody conflicts between its Kalkadunga Aboriginal people and the early European settlers. Now there's a diverse population, which includes Australia's largest Finnish community.

When the aircraft touched down at the next stop, Longreach, home to the Stockmen's Hall of Fame, which honours the men and women who developed the inland, the Catholic nun Sister Anne Maree Jensen was the first to carry it. The 'flying nun', as she is affectionately known to locals, has logged more than 3300 hours in her Cessna, dispensing pastoral care to the outback. An estimated crowd of 4000, some travelling as far as 800 km, cheered the torchbearers on. An unseasonal overnight downpour threatened to put a dampener on the party, but the sun broke through the clouds just as the aircraft touched down. The 'flying nun' joked she'd been awake all night praying for good weather. Dozens of runners, and riders wearing the traditional stockman's uniform of Akubra hat and Drizabone coat, participated in the commemorative stop.

Travelling in a generally south-easterly direction, from Dalby to Bowenville, Jondaryan to Oakey, the torch progressed to Charlton and into the Darling Downs. There, Olympic gold medallist Glynis Nunn-Cearns carried it and lit the community cauldron in her hometown of Toowoomba, which had raised the funds for her first foray into international sport 23 years before. Sports funding has changed dramatically over the years but the enthusiasm of citizens for one of their local heroes, even in the midst of a downpour, remained unaltered. Toowoomba, Queensland's largest inland city, is known for its fine architecture, magnificent parks and gardens – which were well watered on that day.

As the torch headed south next morning along the highway through Greenmount and Allora to the agricultural town of Warwick, crowds again turned out in large numbers to cheer the runners on, even before breakfast. A local pub put on a champagne breakfast which proved so popular that people had to be turned away. Most were happy just to be there, with their Australian flags and fold-up picnic chairs.

The route now turned towards the coast. The contrasting environments of sea and outback have figured prominently in the way Australians perceive themselves. It was fitting that the Australian leg of the torch relay begin in one environment and move towards the other. Locals were out in force as the torch and its convoy passed through Aratula, Boondah, Beaudesert, Canungra, Nerang, Tugun, Bilinga and Kirra, before arriving at the resort town of Coolangatta. Like so many of the towns the torch passed through on its Australian odyssey, Coolangatta got its name from the local Aboriginal language.

Coolangatta forms part of one of the nation's most famous tourist areas, the Gold Coast. Here three members of one family carried the torch on the same day, Mayor Gary Baidon, his Olympian swimmer son Andrew, and Andrew's father-in-law Michael Wenden, the swim king of the 1968 Olympic Games.

The border towns of Coolangatta in Queensland and Tweed Heads in New South Wales are separated only by a bridge. The woman who would later sing the Australian national anthem at the Opening Ceremony, Julie Anthony, took the torch from Queensland to Tweed Heads on 11 June for its first brief foray into the state hosting the Olympic Games. Former world cycling champion Jack Hoobin

The Olympic Torch Relay Volume Two Chapter Two



- 15. Schoolchildren come out in force to witness the torch relay. On its way to Sydney, the Olympic flame covered 27 000 km and travelled through all States and Territories, all within one hour's drive of 85 per cent of the nation's population
- 16. On Day 3, the torch pauses at the Stockman's Hall of Fame in Longreach
- 17. Trevor Hendy, ex-Iron Man champion, carries the torch along Southport Beach in Queensland on Day 5



16

GREG GARAY/SCOGG



17

GREG GARAY/SCOGG

The Olympic
Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two



18. John Rodgers is distracted from his run when he passes local school girls dressed as Greek goddesses

19. Residents in Blackwater have prepared signs and paper torches and dressed up the town for the occasion

18



GREG GARAY/SCOGG

had succumbed to cancer only 42 hours before his allocated run through Tweed Heads so his widow bravely carried the torch in his memory before it headed across the border back into Queensland.

Hundreds of surf-lifeguards held public celebrations after legendary iron men and women carried the torch the length of Surfers Paradise beach while huge waves crashed in the background, passing in and out of the shadows cast by the high-rise hotels when the sun burst through the cloud.

In Brisbane on 14 June, retired Australian cricket captain Alan Border ran the flame in Australia's third largest city. Another well-known runner, rugby league legend Wally Lewis, former Queensland and Australian captain, remarked, "You can pretend you're above all this stuff but no one who carries the torch is unaffected." All those who touched the torch were in turn touched by it, and not only on the day of their run. In Queensland and elsewhere many torchbearers would later take their torches to youth detention centres, nursing homes and schools to share them with others.

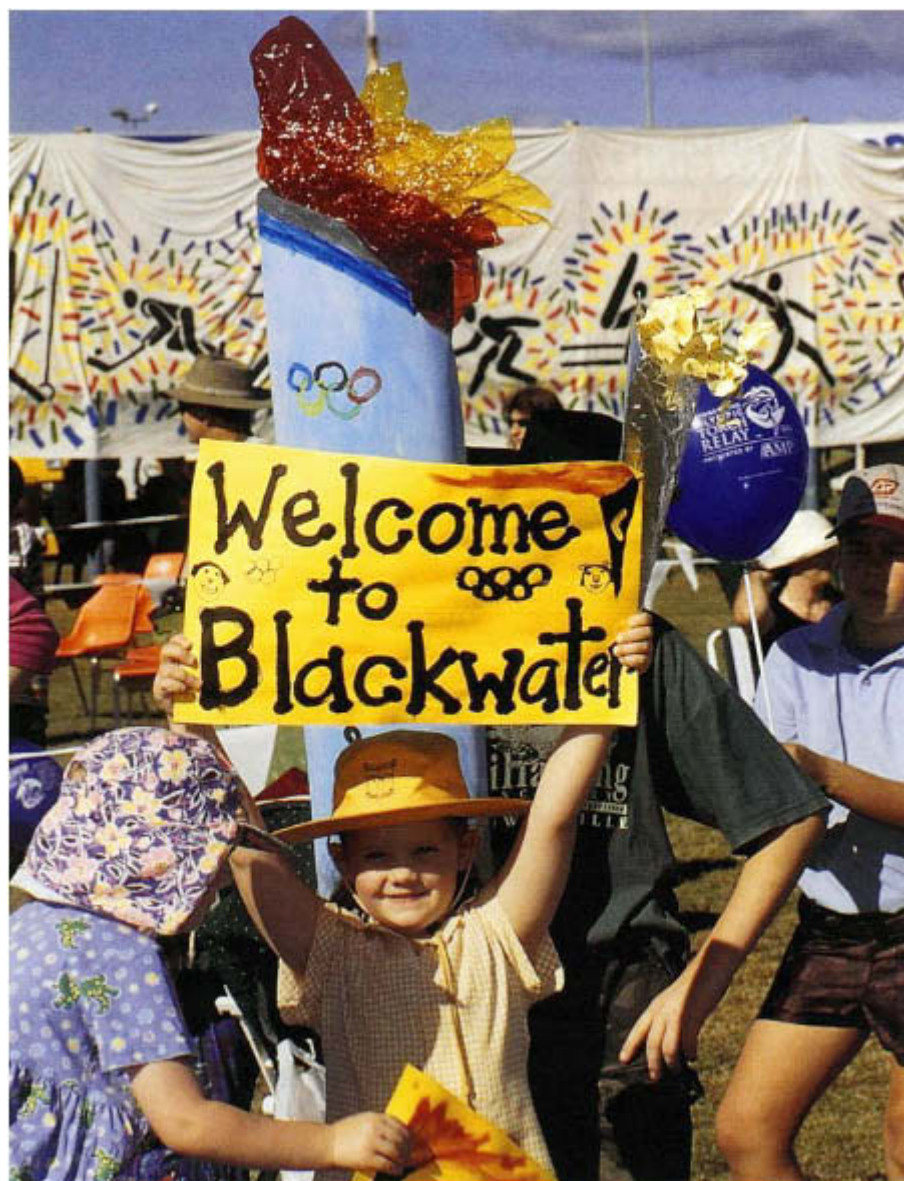
After proceeding through a chain of towns stretching northward from Brisbane to the Sunshine Coast, a flotilla of small watercraft greeted the torch in the resort town of Noosa, on Day

9, 16 June. Later, a few kilometres inland, Olympic sprinter Raelene Boyle lit the cauldron at Tewantin. And on the other side of the Pacific, in a symbolic gesture, Nova Peris-Kneebone, the first runner in Australia, handed a torch replica to Muhammad Ali, the last torchbearer of the 1996 Atlanta Games.

Earlier on Day 9 Bob Tisdall, aged 93 and the oldest surviving Olympic champion in the world, admitted to being a bit puffed after his 500 m run into the Nambour showgrounds through a cheering crowd. In 1932 he was an Irish hurdles champion, competing at the Los Angeles Games; by now he had been an Australian for over a quarter of a century.

Few sights on the whole of the torch relay were as moving as when the citizens of Kingaroy, some 700 strong, fell in alongside Dean Clifford on Day 10, 17 June, and helped him walk his relay leg. Dean has a rare skin disease and normally battles to walk only a few metres. Time and time again, stories of courage were shared by other torchbearers fighting physical disease or other traumas. And few present will ever forget Edna Malone, who made her way to the community cauldron through a colourful sea of 60 000 hands, 'planted' as a symbol for Reconciliation, in the nearby town of Cherbourg.

19



GREG GARAY/SCOGG

Most overseas people have trouble enough differentiating the locations of the main cities of Australia without trying to locate the tiny towns that dot the landscape. The torch relay included hundreds of these 'one horse towns', towns like Gootchie pronounced the same as Gucci, but with no link to the fashion designer. As the torch passed through on Day 11, 18 June, most of the town's population of ten showed up, waving flags and umbrellas in front of a homemade sign, hoping to put Gootchie on the world map.

At Hervey Bay, a location known for sightings of humpback whales, there was only torch-watching when the flame arrived. From there it was ferried by catamaran to the largest sand island in the world, World Heritage-listed Fraser Island. Welcomed by children bearing gifts of honeycomb and shellfish, it proceeded by four-wheel drive vehicle along the beach, beautiful against awe-inspiring backdrops of Lake McKenzie.

On to Bundaberg, the nation's rum-producing centre, a town whose name is formed from a combination of Bund, the name of the local Aboriginal tribe, and 'berg', the Saxon word for town.

Near Rockhampton, former Scot Alison Maynard's parents flew in from Glasgow to help their daughter celebrate her 37th birthday when she carried the torch. "It's just like a big birthday candle," she exclaimed in an excited brogue.

On Day 17, 24 June, legends of Australian swimming made a big splash at Townsville's Tobruk Pool, where they had set world records in training for the Melbourne 1956 Games. On this day, Murray Rose, John Konrads, Jon Henricks and Lorraine Crapp swam a relay in the pool against local schoolchildren, before swim coach Laurie Lawrence lit the cauldron. Next day, the sun shone in Tully for the arrival

of the torch, in the town the locals boast is the wettest in Australia. It receives an average annual rainfall of 4200 mm. The torch relay continued north and finished the day in Innisfail, where champion triathlete Brad Bevan ran the final leg into the local park.

Five of Australia's 11 World Heritage Areas are located in Queensland. The torch relay through the far north caught glimpses of beautiful tropical islands and rainforests, highlighting the nation's commitment to protecting valuable natural assets such as the Great Barrier Reef. However, it was not only the beauty of the region that was noticeable, but the warm-hearted and enthusiastic greeting given to the Olympic torch relay and its entourage.

High above sea-level are the tropical tablelands, the magnificent setting for Atherton, where the torch relay stopped for lunch on Day 19. In North Queensland's dairy capital, 100 black and white dairy cows, tied with 1000 balloons, were herded into the five Olympic rings formation to celebrate the torch's arrival.

Here too, Constantine Verevis, the first torchbearer of the 1956 Olympic Torch Relay, once again carried the flame. As was usual along the route, locals lined the streets, and a local nursing home placed chairs along the street for its residents better to witness the spectacle.

Later that day, the flame travelled to Kuranda, 'the village in the rainforest', and across the 7.5 km Scenic Skyrail over

World Heritage-listed rainforest. It was carried by Milton Brim, a member of the Tjapukai-speaking people of the rainforests of tropical North Queensland. Milton's nephew, Wally Brim, celebrated his 24th birthday by carrying the flame into the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, where it was received in a traditional welcoming ceremony by the elders of his tribe.

From here it made the short trip into Cairns, gateway to tropical North Queensland, the Great Barrier Reef and the vast wilderness of the Cape York Peninsula. More than 35 000 people gathered in the city for an afternoon and evening of well-organised entertainment. Festivities started at midday and included a parade. The crowd, including a group of more than 60 torchbearers from the Melbourne 1956 Olympic torch relay, roared when the Olympic flame wound its way through the city in the evening.

The next day, the torch relay travelled out to the Great Barrier Reef, an area of coral reef extending 2000 km along the east coast of Australia, made up of more than 2900 individual reefs and 900 small islands and home to more than 400 different types of coral. The best way to see the reef is by diving on it, so the Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay team took the flame diving.

On Agincourt Reef, Wendy Craig Duncan, a marine biologist, took the flame for a 2 minute 40 second diving adventure. A special flare burned at 2000°C, ensuring a bright flame easily visible to the local fish and underwater photographers.

The Olympic Torch Relay

Volume Two
Chapter Two



20
GREG GARAY/SOCOG



21
GREG GARAY/SOCOG

20. On day 19, the torch is greeted by locals in Malanda in North Queensland

21. Traditional owner of the land Milton Brim holds up the flame while riding on the Sky Rail in Kurinda

22. Wendy Craig-Duncan, a marine biologist on the Great Barrier Reef, takes an encased flame for a dive at the Agincourt Reef



22

GREG GARAY/SOCOG

23



ADAM PRETTYVALSPORT

Escorted by a flotilla of boats, the flame then entered the harbour of Port Douglas where elders of the Yalanji Aboriginal tribe sang a traditional song of the sea to welcome it to their shores. Next morning the flame was back on an aircraft; flown to Horn Island, it was put on a pearl lugger and ferried across to Thursday Island to be greeted by Joseph Wasaga, an elder of the Kaurareg people.

Dressed in traditional headdress and armed with spears of past wars, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders welcomed the torch. Despite the various controversies which had broken out leading up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, the torch relay was showing that it could galvanise a state and then a nation in a fashion as strong as the stainless steel of the torch itself. Queensland's love affair with the torch ended with a celebration on Thursday Island as the state reluctantly farewelled it.

Northern Territory Reprise

First stop on the return to the Territory, which is sometimes described as Australia's equivalent of Texas, was Katherine. Settled in the late nineteenth century as an outpost on the Overland Telegraph line, Katherine is perhaps best known today as the gateway to Katherine Gorge in the Nitmiluk National Park. The Gorge, a series of spectacular water-filled ravines cut into a vast rock plateau, is one of Australia's most famous natural features. The torch travelled through the Gorge by boat.

Back in Katherine for the evening celebrations, busloads of children and local sports clubs arrived to take part in another mini Olympic Games. The children took centre stage to provide an enthusiastic display of their ability in a number of sports including gymnastics, martial arts and athletics.

Soon after dawn on 29 June, on Day 22 of the relay, the torch travelled the short distance to Tindal Royal Australian Airforce base. Here it joined a 40-minute flight to Coinda in Kakadu National Park, one of the largest reserves of the Aboriginal people. A diversion was made into the Yellow Water Billabong and Paperbark Swamp, typical of the Park's lush wetlands, the existence of which was unknown to most of the outside world before the movie *Crocodile Dundee* featured them.

24



ADAM PRETTYVALSPORT

After returning to Coinda the torch party rejoined the aircraft for the two-hour flight over Darwin and on to the township of Nguiu on Melville Island. With its neighbour Bathurst Island it forms the Tiwi Islands, some 70 km north into the Timor Sea from Darwin. Lunch was taken at Nguiu. Local resident Ronnie Burns carried the torch during the local celebrations. He, like other young Indigenous Australians, had been carried by an aptitude for Australian Rules football away from home to a high profile sporting career in the southern capital cities.

A U-turn and the torch was heading back to the city of Darwin, named for evolutionist Charles Darwin by an officer of the *Beagle* in 1839. Darwin has a number of Australian 'onlys' to its credit; it is the only capital city to be bombed by enemy aircraft during World War II and to be flattened by a cyclone in 1973, and the only one where ocean bathers have to look out not just for sharks but crocodiles as well. Darwin is Australia's face to Asia and has a cosmopolitan population in keeping with its frontier and crossroads location.

25



GREG GARAVIS/COOG

Back on the road, the relay headed from the airport for central Darwin in the early afternoon, passing through the outer suburbs of Nakara, Nightcliff and Parap. Torchbearers in Darwin included Ernest Chin, who was among the first on hand to help with rescues and clean-ups in the wake of cyclone Tracey.

A highlight of the night's festivities was 'The Cultural Flame', a song and dance performance in which 64 indigenous and ethnic cultures performed.

Western Australia

The Olympic flame made its first stop in Western Australia at Kununurra, Aboriginal for 'big waters' on Day 23 of the torch relay. A remote town in the Kimberley region, Kununurra sits on the Ord River, gateway to the Bungle Bungle ranges and the world's largest diamond mine, the only place in the world where pink diamonds are found.

The flame flew through much of northern Western Australia, as this area of the state is vast and dotted by only a few remote townships. Western Australia is roughly 2.5 million square kilometres in area, larger than Texas, Japan, New Zealand and Great Britain combined.

Next the flame landed in Broome on the north-west coast, known as the pearling capital of the world in the 1900s. The town's rich culture is strongly influenced by a longstanding Asian presence. The highlight was the flame being carried along famous Cable Beach at sunset, on a camel ridden by Broome local, Jamali Bin Talib.

After an evening of celebrations the torch relay got off to an early start on 1 July for a day flight to Carnarvon, with



26

The Olympic Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two

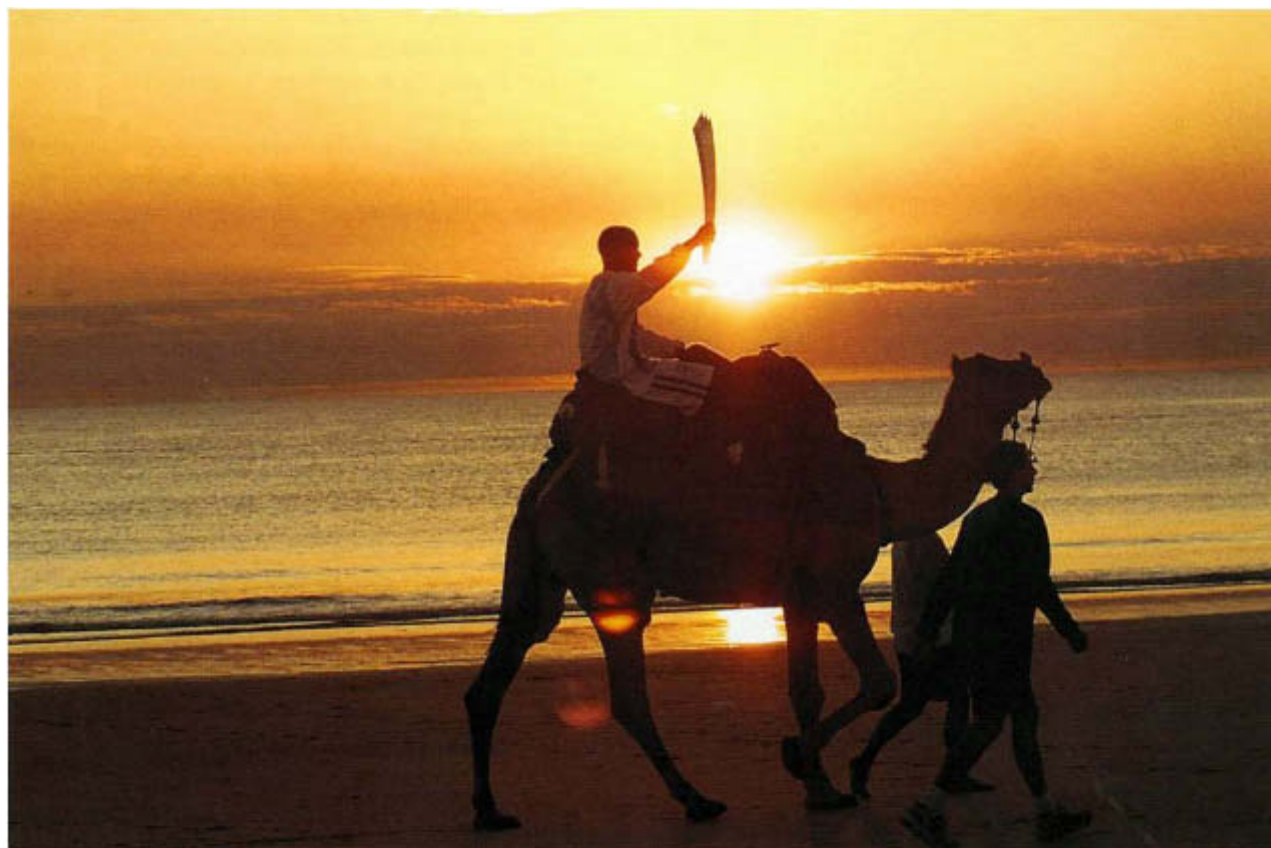


GREG GARAY/SOCOG

celebrations en route at airports in Port Hedland and Karratha. These celebrations were brief, due to the long distances to be travelled on Day 24, but the reception by the locals in each town was warm and impressive.

Another flight and after lunch at Geraldton the Olympic flame landed in Albany, a town facing the Southern Ocean on the southern tip of Western Australia. Albany is the site of the state's oldest European settlement and was a commercial whaling station until the 1970s. Today it is one of Australia's most popular holiday destinations.

Leaving Albany on Day 26, 3 July, the flame returned to road travel, accompanied by the relay convoy. It travelled to the 'Valley of the Giants' in the Walpole-Nornalup National Park where karri and tingle trees tower 40 m above the forest floor. Who better to carry the Olympic flame



27

GREG GARAY/SOCOG

23. Opposite page: The torch relay travels by boat on Yellow Water Billabong in Kakadu National Park, a World Heritage region in the Northern Territory
24. Opposite page: Aboriginal Goon Wingu dancers and musicians perform the traditional dance of the long yam in honour of the torch in Kakadu National Park
25. Opposite page: A local Aboriginal torchbearer runs with the torch, escorted by two young boys on his leg of the relay on Day 22
26. Kids wait to catch a glimpse of the Olympic torch as it arrives at Carnarvon airport in Western Australia on Day 24, from where it was flown to Geraldton, 465 km to the south
27. Jamali Binalib holds the torch high as he rides into the sunset atop a camel on Broome Beach in Western Australia

The Olympic Torch Relay

Volume Two
Chapter Two



29



GREG GARY/SOCOG

28. A local of Mandurah, Western Australia, stops work on his roof renovations to watch the torch pass by on Day 29 of the relay

29. The flame travels aboard a sailboat in Fremantle, Western Australia. The port city dubbed 'Freo' by locals, hosted the 1987 America's Cup

30. Ray Andrews carries the torch with Perth's skyline in the background

through these giants than 2.18 m tall Australian basketball Olympian, Luc Longley? Luc carried the flame across a treetop walk, suspended 40 m above ground.

En route to Busselton on Day 27, the relay passed through Bridgetown and Nannup. Running in Busselton, Munich 1972 Olympic Games swimming hero Shane Gould had to have her torch relit six times, due to the blustery winds. She passed over the flame to Wardani tribal elder George Webb to continue its journey.

The relay stopped overnight in Bunbury, headed north again on Day 28 through towns such as Wokalup, Waroona, Pinjarra and Coodanup. The lunchtime celebration was held in Pinjarra, one of the oldest towns in Western Australia. Later, in Mandurah, Betty Cuthbert, the 'Golden Girl' of Australia's first Olympic Games in Melbourne, assisted with lighting the community cauldron. In 1956 she won three gold medals.

From Mandurah to Fremantle on Day 29, the torch relay wound its way through Port Kennedy and Warnbro to the lunchtime celebration stop in Rockingham. Paul Martin, nominated for his bravery in rescuing his neighbours from their burning home, started the relay after lunch in Rockingham.

The size of the crowds increased as the torch moved up the coast, cheering on their heroes, including Australia's most successful female track Olympian, Shirley de la Hunty, nee Strickland. As an Olympic sprinter, Strickland won three gold medals, one silver and three bronze.

The torch arrived in Fremantle for an evening stopover to close Day 29. Days 30 and 31 were spent in and around Perth, capital city of Western Australia.

One famous Perth hero ran along the beach, his old training ground – Herb Elliott, former world 1500 m record holder



28

GREG GARY/SOCOG

and Olympic gold medallist in Rome, 1960. He was joined by another Australian household name, cricketing great Dennis Lillee, as well as many more community torchbearers.

On Saturday 9 July, the Olympic flame left Perth for its 600 km journey east to Kalgoorlie, following the path of the Perth-to-Kalgoorlie water pipeline. Kalgoorlie, home to one of the richest ore bodies on earth, had adopted the motto 'Go For Gold'. The residents turned out to cheer the torch and farewelled it on its way across the Nullarbor Plain to Port Augusta in South Australia on board the Indian Pacific train, one of the great rail journeys of the world.

With speeds averaging 85 km per hour, the train stretches for more than a kilometre – longer than the average run leg for a torchbearer. Accommodated in its own special carriage and protected by security guards, the torch travelled east across the famous plain, a seemingly empty expanse of harsh terrain that typifies the outback. Other carriages housed media, Olympic officials, sponsors and celebrities such as Thomas Keneally, one of Australia's best-known authors.

South Australia

Cook was the train's first stopover in South Australia. Normally home to only three people and a three-legged dog, the outback town's population swelled to over 500 as they indulged in their own version of an 'Outback Games' for a few hours. Celebrities, Olympians and media joined in light-hearted contests of breaststroke in the sand and desert golf before boarding the train again and heading further east while the town returned to normal.

Children from remote communities had travelled hundreds of kilometres to see the flame and lingered on. "It's something



30

GREG GARY/SOCOG

they'll remember the rest of their lives," commented one teacher, who had taken the initiative to write to Games organisers, requesting that the torch stop along the long train route. After Cook, the torch made nine more stops in tiny outback settlements such as Ooldea, Barton and Tarcoola – bringing more media attention to these 'dots on the map' in the 15-minute stops than most had seen in the past hundred years.

On 12 July, Day 35, as hundreds waited in the pre-dawn darkness, the Indian Pacific rolled into its final stop of Port Augusta.

Times had been tough in the neighbouring steel town of Whyalla, but on this day community spirit was high. Every schoolchild received a commemorative certificate and the town joined in the celebration of the flame, a symbol of hope and goodwill. It travelled on, following the barren coast to Port Lincoln. Los Angeles 1984 Olympic gold medallist Dean Lukin carried the flame in this, his hometown, as the fishing village showed off its industry by arranging tuna boats in the Olympic rings formation in the bay.

The relay stayed overnight at Port Pirie then set off for the Clare Valley, renowned for its exquisite wines and quality restaurants and as the home of ecclesiastic wines produced by the Jesuit Society. The torch relay rested for lunch on Day 36 to celebrate the 'Grapes, Gourmet and Games' of the region. After a short break, the journey continued through the wine trails, weaving through Watervale and Leasingham, Auburn and Kapunda into the neighbouring valley, the Barossa. Located 70 km north-east of the state capital of Adelaide, the Barossa Valley is another rich wine growing area. Its pastoral landscape, small villages, churches and chateaux have been influenced by the German immigrants who first settled there in the nineteenth century. Twenty-one per cent of Australia's wine is made, produced and bottled in the Barossa, making it the country's largest and most important wine-producing region.

As the daylight faded in the town of Tanunda on Day 36, a crowd slowly began to build, awaiting the arrival of the Olympic flame at their celebration site. The Barossa Schools Choir, formed from eight local schools, filled the spectator stands of the sports oval and huge bouquets of blue AMP torch relay balloons were distributed through the crowd. Marjorie Jackson Nelson, known as the 'Lithgow Flash', SOCOG Board Member and Olympian, welcomed the flame officially with Tanunda Mayor Brian Hearne.

Throughout the relay's travels it was invariably dark by the time the flame reached its evening celebration site and, when it did come into view – bobbing up and down through the crowd – a roar of cheering would roll along with it. A faint smell of gas indicated that the cauldron was ready to be lit, and when the flame made contact it was with a boom, to huge applause from the crowd.

On Day 37 the torch relay had to brave wind and rain along the roads to Gawler. Crowds of people wearing torch-shaped hats waited along the highway to watch it run past. The evening celebration in Modbury featured fireworks, a didgeridoo player and local violinists to entertain those who had braved the weather.

On Day 38, the Olympic torch relay wound its way to Adelaide, home to approximately one million people, a city of wide open spaces and green parklands. After a journey on a single scull rowed by Olympian John Bolt, the lunchtime celebration was held in Glenelg, an historic beachside suburb, where a crowd of 25 000 watched and cheered in warm winter sunshine.

The Olympic flame was borne through Glenelg and boarded an historic tram for a 10 km journey to the heart of Adelaide. Over the 12 hours of the day's relay 160 torchbearers carried the flame. It received a noisy welcome of beating drums, choirs, music and fireworks, and was cheered on by the thousands of onlookers.

The day's final torchbearer, Margaret Messenger, a 1956 Olympic swimmer, became a 2000 Olympic messenger as she walked through the crowd towards the cauldron.

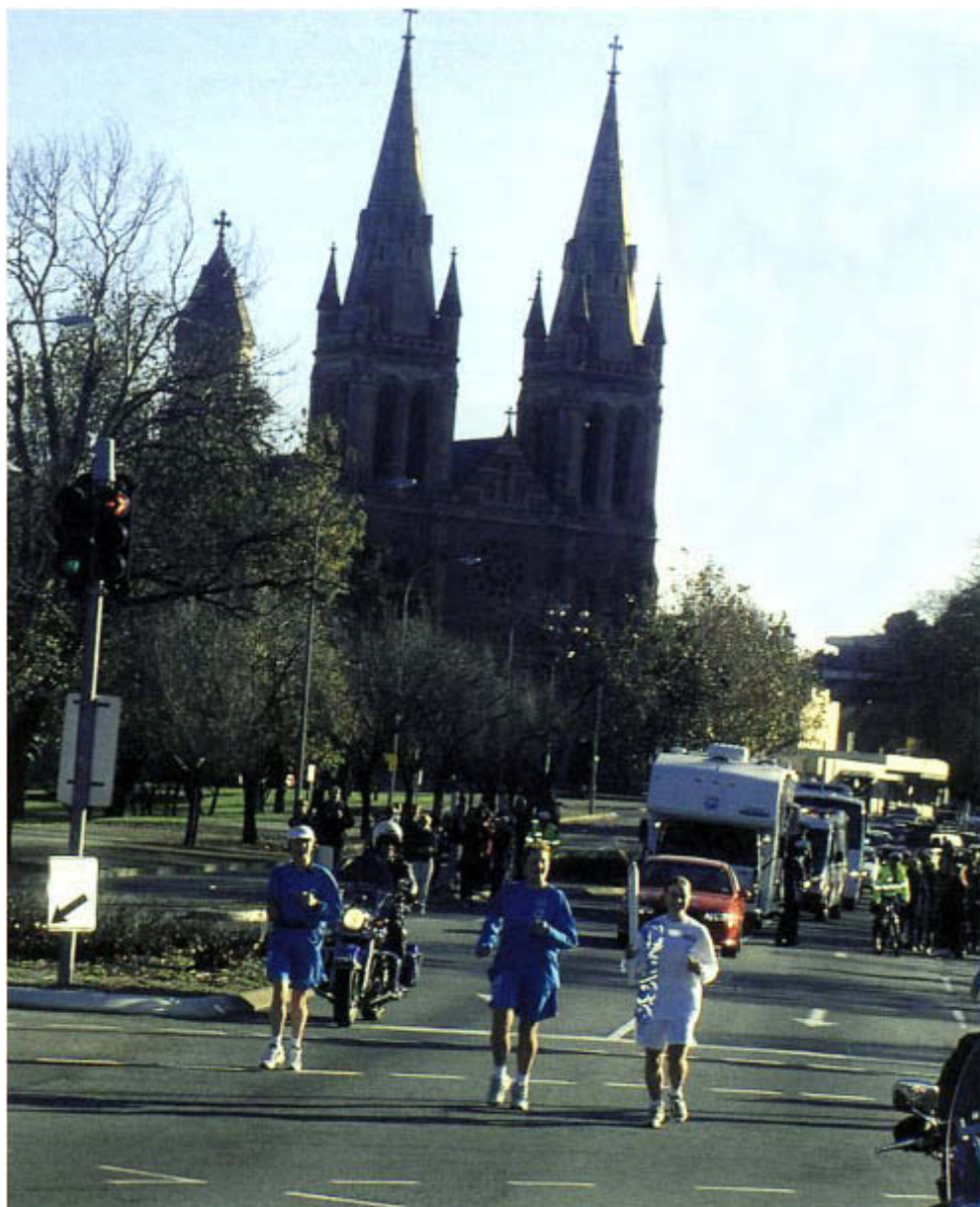
Australian-born NASA astronaut, Dr Andy Thomas, carried the flame down Rundle Mall in central Adelaide. In May 2000 he had taken a replica torch into space aboard the space shuttle *Atlantis*. Thrilled to have the opportunity of being a torchbearer, Dr Thomas echoed the sentiments of

The Olympic Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two



31
GREG GARAY/SOCO

31. During the relay's last day in Western Australia, police in Bulla Bulla get a closer look at the torch while the crew takes a rest break
32. On the relay's fourth day in South Australia, Raphaela Oust carries the torch through Adelaide



32
BRENT HEDGES/SOCO



The Olympic Torch Relay

Volume Two
Chapter Two

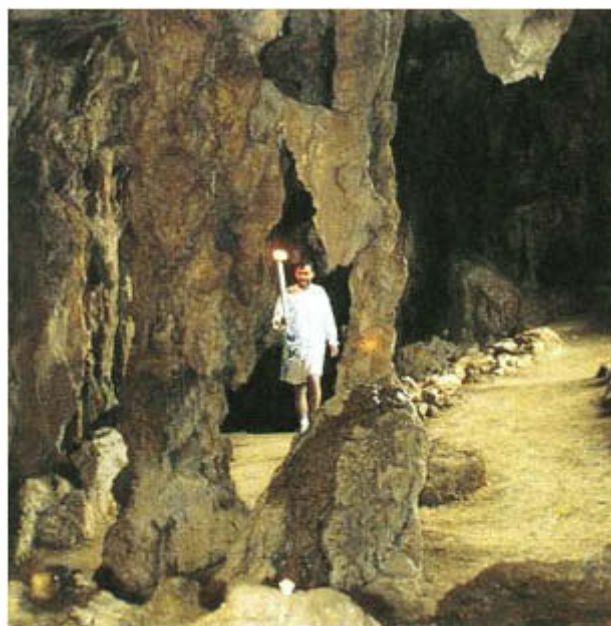


33. Michael Snadjar carries the torch through a limestone cave in Naracoorte

34. Kids run along the roadside to cheer on the torchbearers as the relay travels through Branxholme in Victoria

35. The township of Casterton came out in force to watch Emily Rooke and escort runner Timothy Brown carry the flame through their community

33



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

many when he said, "The relay has captured people's attention in a way I don't think was expected, from the outback and remote areas to the cities."

The next day the Sydney 2000 Torch Relay travelled east, stopping for lunch at Hahndorf in the Adelaide Hills. Torchbearer Tim Edge carried the flame over the Murray River Bridge, built in 1859 as the first bridge to span the river. One of Australia's largest river systems, the Murray stretches more than 2600 km across three states. The same day, Stephen Hill and Gus Nathan, who worked on the combustion components for the torch and cauldrons, were able to try out their own technology as they ran through the Adelaide Hills.

On 18 July, Day 41, the Olympic torch was carried through a three-million-year-old cave which houses 93 species of

animal fossils. The World Heritage-listed Blanche Cave in Naracoorte was aglow with 1300 candles for the occasion. "It was like running through fairyland," torchbearer Phylliss Brophy commented, as the locals enthusiastically shared this little-known beauty with the world.

The flame continued on south, through Coonawarra, another well-known wine growing region, before heading to Mount Gambier, its final destination in South Australia. A region renowned for dairy, wool and wheat, Mount Gambier is set amongst almost extinct volcanic craters and a limestone lake.

Victoria

The flame crossed into Victoria on Day 42 of the torch relay, Wednesday 19 July. It was to travel through the state for 13 days before crossing Bass Strait to Tasmania and then returning to the mainland. Criss-crossing Victoria, the smallest mainland state, the Olympic flame visited desert, beaches, snowfields, cities and rural areas. Its total journey through the state lasted 21 days, covered 3464 km of road and included 2165 torchbearers.

As the Olympic torch crossed the border from South Australia to Victoria, workers tested the retractable cauldron at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Stadium, unaware that an unrelated press conference was being held nearby. Inevitably, photos appeared on the front pages of the nation's newspapers the following day, but the best-kept secret of the Games remained intact - who would have the ultimate honour of lighting the cauldron when the torch had finished its journey?

The residents of Portland, Port Fairy and Warrnambool, on the shores of the Southern Ocean, hardly cared about such speculation as they lined the streets with balloons and flags, recited their own specially composed poems and listened to the haunting sounds of a didgeridoo and children's choirs.

The relay had started in Victoria in pouring rain, which had turned to hail by Day 44, when it ran along the picturesque Great Ocean Road. Olympic hurdler Rob Joyce pushed through gale-force winds atop the rugged cliffs behind the famous limestone rock stacks known as the Twelve Apostles to pass the torch to his daughter Rebecca, herself an Olympic rower, while huge crowds cheered in the chill of the winter's day.

On Day 46, Sunday 23 July, the torch relay travelled through the Victorian country town of Stawell, home of the rich Stawell Gift athletic races. The three-day professional meeting has been held annually since 1878 and now offers A\$100 000 in prizemoney to the 800 athletes competing.

The next day the relay continued with enthusiastic roadside crowds to the lunchtime stop at St Arnaud. There, torchbearer Michael Noonan lit the community cauldron and directed his dance group, the All-Stars, composed of mentally disabled children, in a performance that received tremendous applause from the crowd.

The mighty Murray River forms a large part of the border between the states of Victoria and New South Wales, the Olympic states of 1956 and 2000 respectively. The flame

34



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

35



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

crossed the Murray by paddle-steamer on Day 48 to spend an hour in Moama, giving New South Wales its second brief taste of the flame, before heading back to Victoria.

Next day the Olympic torch left Echuca by bicycle and travelled south to Rochester, birthplace of Sir Hubert 'Oppy' Opperman, one of Australia's greatest cyclists. Born on 29 May, 1904, 'Oppy' won the Australian road cycling championship in 1924 and dominated cycling in distance events for the next ten years.

At the lunchtime celebration in Kyabram, Olympic javelin thrower Pam Matthews lit the community cauldron; the entertainment included traditional Japanese drummers who had travelled from Kyabram's sister city in Japan for the event.

Thursday 27 July marked the halfway mark for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay in Australia. Arriving in Bendigo, the torch was carried by World War I digger Jack Lockett, who at 109 years of age, was born five years before the first modern Olympic Games was held in 1896. Standing tall and proud, and defying the statistics of his age, Lockett lit the cauldron as 15 000 residents turned out for the halfway mark celebration during the lunchtime stopover.

On Day 52, 29 July, the torch relay travelled south-east, from Ballarat, the town where Australia's only civil uprising, the Eureka Stockade, occurred in 1854. The incident has become symbolic of the nation's attitude to authority – an attitude that appeared in themes of the Opening Ceremony performance.

The flame headed south and reached Geelong for the lunchtime celebration before reaching Melbourne's western suburbs, where it was carried down the straight at Flemington Racecourse by legendary horse-trainer Bart Cummings. Flemington is the home of Australia's greatest horserace, the



36

GREG GARAY/SCOGG

Melbourne Cup. A crowd of 30 000 had gathered; more than for most race meetings.

In the early dawn on 30 July, the torch left Flemington, travelling through Melbourne suburbs to Heidelberg Heights, location of the Olympic Village in 1956. A multicultural suburb today, the streets were lined with people from many nations, as they were in 1956. Telephone posts were decorated in the colours of the Olympic rings, as were residents' lawn chairs and potted plants in what was clearly one of the social highlights of their year. "My Mum was a little star in the ceremonies of 1956 and my kids have competed in a mini Olympics at the school," one bystander proudly proclaimed.

The flame continued on its way to the historic Melbourne Cricket Ground, home of Australian Rules Football, and nearly



37

GREG GARAY/SCOGG



38

GREG GARAY/SCOGG



39

GREG GARAY/SCOGG

36. Chris Clarke (left) and Glen Norman pass on the Olympic flame at the Twelve Apostles
37. The 50-vehicle torch convoy travels toward Portland on Day 42
38. The flame burns in a cauldron on the Pevensy, a paddlesteamer built in 1911, floating down the Murray River
39. Jonathan Turnbull shows his herding skills by rounding up the sheep on his family's sheep farm near Wycheproof in Victoria

The Olympic
Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two



40



SEAN GARNSWORTHY/ALLSPORT

Olympic Games. The relay crossed Bass Strait overnight aboard the *Spirit of Tasmania* to Devonport in Tasmania.

Tasmania

Located in the south-east of Australia, Tasmania is Australia's smallest state, an island separated from the mainland by Bass Strait. It is about the same size as the Republic of Ireland, with a similar climate of four distinct seasons. Approximately 30 per cent of Tasmania is designated as World Heritage, National Park or Reserve lands and it is this unspoiled beauty that attracts more than 500 000 visitors each year. It has a population less than this figure, of whom 190 000 reside in the capital city, Hobart.

41



DARREN MCNAMARA/ALLSPORT

80 000 streamed into the stadium that also saw the 1956 Olympic Games.

Cyclist Ian Browne carried the flame to the entrance and passed it to former Australian cricket captain Mark Taylor, who entered the stadium to a loud cheer. The torch passed to the national soccer team captain, Paul Wade, then to Australian Rules football legend Ron Barassi and finally to Ron Clarke, who as a young athlete lit the cauldron at the Opening Ceremony 44 years earlier and now re-enacted the moment to the cheers of the crowd. The second man to break the 4-minute mile, John Landy, again recited the athlete's oath that he had taken at the Melbourne Games.

42



HAMISH BLAIR/ALLSPORT

Day 54 of the torch relay ended in much the same way as it began. At dawn, thousands had gathered at the front of Dandenong Town Hall and at dusk another crowd gathered at Port Melbourne to cheer the flame as it embarked for Tasmania, having just passed through the inner-western suburbs. Melbourne has one of the largest Greek populations of any city in the world and the torch was cheered by Greek dancers and people donning the national costume of the birthplace of the

The *Spirit of Tasmania* arrived at Devonport, at the mouth of the Mersey River, to an escort of water-skiers towing Australian and Aboriginal flags.

This first day of the torch relay in Tasmania was a huge journey across the north-west coast via Burnie, then south for the overnight stop at Queenstown.

The early morning start on Day 56 from Queenstown was run through fog, which magically rolled away around 9 am. Continuing through sunshine, the relay later in the day travelled through Bridgewater and was carried there by Anna Clayton in a very oversized relay uniform. Anna's father, Derek Fox, chosen as torchbearer for his 17-year contribution as a volunteer firefighter, was too ill to take his place and his daughter proudly ran his leg of the relay.

Next day an Incat fast ferry carried the flame from Hobart across the harbour to Port Arthur, Australia's most dreaded penal settlement in the nineteenth century. The torch then wound its way north towards Launceston, the second largest city in

43



GREG GARY/SOCOC

- 40. Ron Clarke, who had lit the cauldron for the 1956 Melbourne Games as a 19-year-old, re-enacts the famous moment
- 41. Young spectators eagerly await the arrival of the torch in Melbourne's suburbs
- 42. James Tomkins, member of the successful Oarsome Foursome, carries the torch through a crowd of excited schoolchildren
- 43. After the torch had arrived in Tasmania via an Incat ferry, it stopped in Port Arthur, the site of a notorious penal colony. A minute of silence was observed in remembrance of tourists killed here in a 1996 massacre

44



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

Tasmania, where it was carried across the Cataract Gorge, adding a chairlift to its list of conveyances across the Apple Isle.

One of the runners on this leg was Olympian Albert Johnson. Johnson represented Great Britain in the 50 km walk event at the 1956 Melbourne and 1960 Rome Olympic Games before moving to Australia to work as a coach.

"I think the thing about this one, it's the people's torch," he said after his run. "I don't think anybody could ever emulate this situation. It's special. Everybody knows somebody who is running ... the previous torch [relays] were sort of select people, this one's mums and dads, which makes it real great."

On it went to Deloraine, then Devonport, where it boarded the *Spirit of Tasmania* for the return journey to Victoria. On Day 60, Sunday 6 August, the torch relay team and the Olympic flame took a well-earned rest.

Victoria Again

Thousands of people on the Mornington Peninsula flocked to the early dawn return of the Olympic torch to Victoria on Day 61, 7 August. Olympic gold medallist Debbie Flintoff-King was the first to carry it from the pier. More than 10 000 people saw the torch cover the route from Mount Eliza up the Nepean Highway to Frankston, where a teenage skateboarder tried in vain to hijack the flame. In a more scheduled interruption some kilometres later, the torch relay paused in Berwick at the bronze statue of Edwin Flack, Australia's first Olympic gold medallist, who won the 800 m and 1500 m on the track at the 1896 Athens Games.

The journey continued east on Day 62. Keith Brew, who lit the cauldron in Sale, was a burn victim of an explosion at a gas plant which had killed two others. He displayed the typically laconic Australian sense of humour as he told the crowd, "I much prefer being on this end of the flame."

On Day 64 the historic restored steam train, *Puffing Billy*, carried the flame through the Dandenong Ranges on a 45-minute trip from Emerald to Belgrave. Locally born singer Vanessa Amorosi entertained the crowds in Emerald in a warm up for her starring role in the Olympic Opening Ceremony.

The torch continued northward, stopping overnight at Wangaratta in 'Kelly Country'. One of the most memorable

images of the Sydney 2000 Opening Ceremony was to be the 'Ned Kellys' wearing the trademark iron masks used by Ned Kelly, Australia's best-known bushranger.

After 67 days in Australia, on 13 August, the Olympic torch reached the 'high point' in its 100-day journey. At 1861 m above sea level, the flame burned bright against a darkening sky as three-time Winter Olympian Steven Lee skied with it down the summit ridge of Mount Hotham towards a crowd of 5000 in the mountain village.

Then the convoy continued further north to Wodonga before crossing the Murray River into Albury and back to New South Wales. Damian Clark, a local athletics coach from Victoria, crossed the border over the Union Bridge into New South Wales and ignited the torch of Anthony Zerbst next to the 'Welcome to NSW' sign. More than 20 000 had turned out in cold and windy conditions. Like many before her, a bystander commented, "We certainly couldn't afford to go to Sydney for the Olympics so this is our one and only chance to be involved and have a memory for our kids."

Sandy Hollway, the CEO of SOCOG, carried the torch in his hometown. Hollway commented, "This is the finest moment I've had so far in the four years I've been involved in organising the Games." Rod McGeoch, head of Sydney's 2000 Olympic Bid, responsible for securing the Olympic Games for Sydney, had carried the torch earlier in the day as one of the last runners in Victoria.

New South Wales

15 August, Day 69, was the first full day for the Olympic torch in the Olympic state. From the moment 88-year-old Merrick Webb set off in a dawn downpour from Albury in a

The Olympic Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two



44. Tasmania's spectacular wilderness was featured in the relay's journey on Day 55. Mark Saint-John stops for a moment near Tullah

45. SOCOG's Chief Executive, Sandy Hollway, enjoys his time with the torch as it enters New South Wales on Day 68 near Albury

46. Again the relay passes through colder climates, as Jenny Altermatt carries the flame through a guard of honour on the summit of Mount Hotham in Victoria



45

GREG GARAY/SOCOG



46

GREG GARAY/SOCOG

The Olympic Torch Relay

Volume Two
Chapter Two



47. Local kids run toward the torch relay with flags to signal the arrival of the torch in Young, New South Wales, on Day 71

48. Mark Downward and escort runner Andrew Haines carry the torch to a zinc mine near Broken Hill, a desert town once renowned for its mines

49. Near Cowra in New South Wales, 11-year old Todd White poses with the torch between his daily chores of looking after his father's race horses



GREG GARAY/SCOGG



GREG GARAY/SCOGG



GREG GARAY/SCOGG

wheelchair, thousands lined the long route all the way north to Griffith that evening. Most were crowded along main streets, although others were to be found on the more remote stretches between Corowa, Mulwala and Tocumwal. Under a drizzly sky, Isobel Scott carried the golden flame and a sprig of golden wattle in Burrumbuttock. To the home crowd cheers of 100 residents, she undoubtedly felt every bit as proud as if she had carried it into the Olympic Stadium.

In Griffith more than 2000 children paid tribute to the region's rich agricultural history, carrying lanterns representing the fruit and vegetables grown in the area. They dressed as grapes, onions, gherkins, oranges and peaches, moving like a sea of

lights into Ted Scobie Oval with their lanterns. One youngster commented, "It's so cool that the torch is here because we don't have anything else."

From Griffith the flame continued south-east to Wagga Wagga for the evening celebration on August 16, greeted by most of the population of 50 000 in this regional hub that supports dairy, lamb and wheat industries.

On the following morning, Day 71, the torch continued north-east to Junee and on to Cootamundra, the birthplace of Sir Donald Bradman, Australia's most famous sportsman and cricketer.

Wombat, a tiny town between Young and Cootamundra with 120 citizens, was not scheduled to be visited by the flame. The residents decided to deliver their message of peace by releasing a dozen white doves as the convoy passed. In recognition of this gesture the organisers arranged to have one of the miner's lamps which protected the 'mother flame' make a quick stop in Wombat in addition to its scheduled visits before the evening celebration in Cowra.

18 August began in Cowra with the ringing of the 'World Peace Bell', a replica of the original housed in the United Nations Building in New York. The torch was later carried to the Parkes Radio Telescope by Robert Wilson, the town's Mayor, where he was strapped into the 1000-tonne dish. The dish, accurate enough to focus on a pinhead on the moon, was then tilted to place him and the flame high above the crowd.

From Parkes the flame flew west to Mildura and on to the mining town of Broken Hill, where that evening it was given a guard of honour of miners in full regalia, including lamps.

The Hill', as Broken Hill is colloquially known, brought Australia vast mineral wealth and is also headquarters of the School of the Air and the Royal Flying Doctor Service, two organisations essential to the health and education of the people living on remote properties in Australia's inland.

Next the flame flew north-east to Bourke aboard a Royal Flying Doctor Service aircraft for a lunchtime celebration. It was greeted by Mavis Gibbs, who drove 500 km to run 500 m. Carrying the Olympic flame and the pride of surrounding properties, she claimed it was worth every dusty moment of the drive to get there. By aircraft again, the torch travelled east to Lightning Ridge, where most of the world's gem-quality black opals are mined. Then it was on to the cotton-growing town of Moree where the torch was welcomed by traditional Aboriginal music.

On 21 August, the torch headed to Armidale, a university city situated high in the northern tablelands in an area known as New England, for the evening celebration.

Leaving Armidale on Day 76, the torch relay travelled north to Tenterfield, the birthplace of Australian Federation and the international entertainer Peter Allen. The celebrations included the singing of his popular song, 'I Still Call Australia Home', which resonates with a special meaning for many Australians.

The torch then crossed the Great Dividing Range through steep mountains and deep gorges that shelter wilderness rainforest and wet eucalyptus tracts. The route along the Bruxner Highway led to Lismore in the warmer coastal region, eventually reaching Cape Byron, the easternmost point of mainland Australia. Cliff Burvill, a Melbourne 1956 Olympic



50

GREG GARAY/SCCOG

The Olympic Torch Relay

Volume Two
Chapter Two



50. On Day 74, the Olympic flame travels from Broken Hill to Bourke with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, an institution which brings health care services to remote areas
51. A long-time resident of Broken Hill is delighted to catch a glimpse of the torch
52. Timothy Sharman runs toward the Byron Bay lighthouse, Australia's most easterly point. With its dramatic cliffs, beaches and rainforests, the area is a major tourist attraction

cyclist, ran with the torch up to the top of Byron Bay lighthouse, the first spot in Australia to greet the sun each day. In the town of Bangalow, Chamber of Commerce President Terry Blekie noted that in 1956 the torch had passed through the town in the opposite direction. Further south, in Ballina, they declared a half-day public holiday for the evening celebration.

Lunching at Grafton, the town adopted the theme of 'Sporting the Purple', identifying with the magnificent jacaranda trees which famously bloom there in early summer. The trees were not yet in bloom, but buildings, fences and trees along the route were decorated with 42 km of purple crepe paper. Grafton's residents were all encouraged to wear purple to get into the spirit of the jacaranda theme – some even donned purple wigs.

The flame continued to South Kempsey for lunch on Day 79 and Port Macquarie for the evening fireworks. In Port Macquarie, Stephen Lyons, who was born with no legs and



51

GREG GARAY/SCCOG



52

GREG GARAY/SCCOG

53



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

At Karuah, where the Karuah River empties into the broad waters of Port Stephens, the torchbearer came across the old bridge a few minutes before 1 pm, appearing to shimmer slightly in the reflected heat of the road to those waiting at the southern end. The white uniform of the torchbearer and the torch itself were framed against the brilliant blue of the water stretching away east and the far-distant, hazy headlands of Port Stephens. Locals and travellers cheered enthusiastically before turning to the matter of lunch. Many chose to picnic in the riverside park on the prawns and oysters that are a local delicacy.

The City of Newcastle, formerly a major steel centre, has undergone many trials but an estimated 50 000-strong crowd turned out to experience the Olympic spirit and the afternoon and evening legs of the torch relay.

As the torch was run through Foreshore Park near the harbour, the crowd included athletes from the Netherlands, Korean and Chinese Olympic teams who were all in the region for pre-Games training. The cauldron was lit by surfing legend, four-times world champion Mark Richards.

On Monday morning, the torch relay travelled south along the coast to its overnight stop at Gosford. There, SOCOG Board Member and Shadow Minister for the Olympic Games Chris Hartcher, running through his Central Coast electorate, became the first Sydney 2000 torchbearer to carry the flame twice, having carried it in Greece a few months earlier.

The next day, Tuesday 29 August, the torch relay left Gosford and travelled north again to the Hunter Valley town of Cessnock, located in a major wine growing region. The evening celebration at Turner Park in Cessnock showcased

54

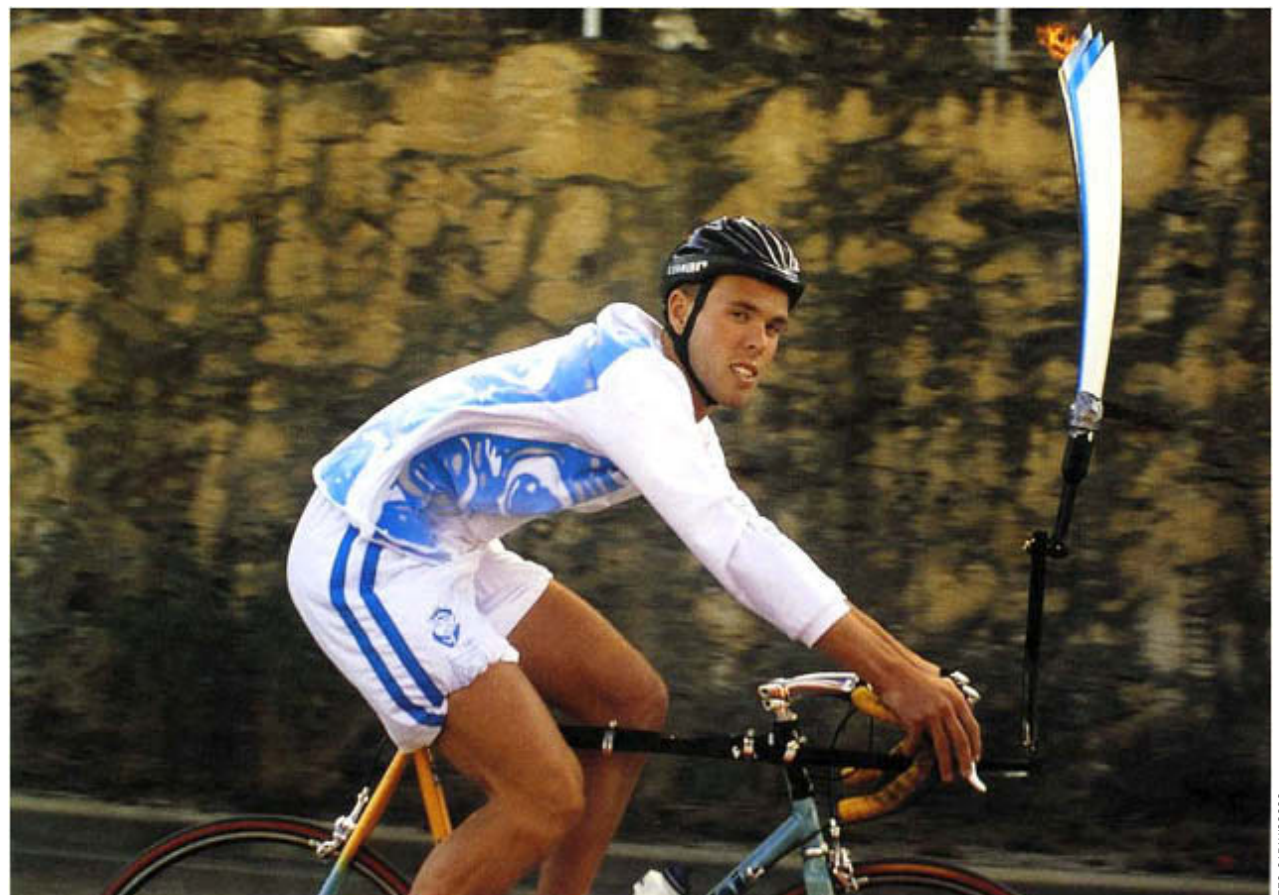


GREG GARAY/SOCOG

one arm, carried the torch. Like most torchbearers, he wanted to keep his torch as a souvenir, so his friends bought it for him. There were similar stories of courage and kindness in numerous other towns. Next day it was Taree for lunch and Tuncurry for dinner, after 80 days on the road in Australia.

On Sunday 27 August, Day 81, the torch relay ran south from Forster through Bulahdelah, Karuah and Raymond Terrace before it reached Newcastle for the evening rest. The day bloomed into a perfect 'spring' afternoon, despite the fact that winter still had several weeks to run. There were some chilly days to come but this day was a foretaste of the unseasonable beach weather that was to bless Sydney during the 16 days of the Games.

55



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

53. Girls from Belmont High School have dressed in the colours of the Olympic rings and jump for joy as the torch passes through the coastal town of Belmont

54. An aboriginal smoke ceremony is held during a lunchtime celebration in Kempsey New South Wales. William Morris and an Indigenous Elder hold the torch during the festivities

55. The torch winds its way through the Blue Mountains, part of the Great Dividing Range and a popular tourist destination, by bicycle. Meanwhile, a crowd of over 50 000 gathered for the evening celebration in Penrith

quality Australian wines, serving a range of local reds and whites for discerning torchbearers and celebrating guests. Local athlete Jennifer Peel lit the cauldron and eight white doves were released to fly over the 8000 who had gathered for the event.

The Olympic torch was relayed through Cessnock and around the wine growing district of Pokolbin before moving on to Maitland where high-profile Australian entertainers Christine Anu and Monica Trapaga entertained the lunchtime crowd. Maitland is the centre of Les Darcy country, the 'died young' boxer who ranks with racehorse Phar Lap amongst the country's foremost sporting tragi-heroes.

Due to the distances to be covered after this stop, the relay continued via motor convoy between a number of towns, in each of which the flame was handed back to the torchbearers. It travelled north along the New England Highway, reaching Muswellbrook for an overnight stop.

On 1 September, the torch reached Dubbo, where next day it did a circuit of the Western Plains Zoo, heading south for lunch at Orange before going on in the afternoon to Bathurst, famous for motor-racing. The city maintained this theme for its torch experience, with nine-time 'King of the Mountain' racing-car driver Peter Brock carrying the flame to the Mount Panorama racing circuit where Australian touring-car champion Craig Lowndes waited for it in his Holden V8 racing car. The flame was transferred to a miner's lantern specially fitted to the car, and taken for two fast laps around the circuit.

On 3 September, the 'Lithgow Flash', Marjorie Jackson Nelson, made a triumphant return to her mining hometown and did a lap of honour with the torch on the modest athletic track where she had first trained for her gold medal performances. It is a cinder track, built by the people of the town to assist her training for the Helsinki 1952 Olympic Games. Jackson usually trained at night, the track lit by car headlights. She repaid the town's efforts with magnificent wins in the 100 m and 200 m in Helsinki. On this day, accompanied by 11 other Lithgow Olympians and the Polish Olympic canoe team, who were training nearby, Jackson watched as a bronze statue of herself was unveiled.

The torch proceeded east across the Blue Mountains, where the cauldron was lit at Katoomba's Echo Point, with the Three Sisters, a spectacular rock formation, looming in the background. The rock outcrops are the subject of an Aboriginal Dreamtime story, in which three sisters are turned to stone by their witch doctor to protect them from a bunyip. This mountain pass was also the means by which the white settlers broke out of their coastal isolation in 1813.

The torch relay came within 45 minutes of Sydney when it stopped overnight at Penrith. There 50 000 people gathered in a local park where Kane Towns lit the cauldron in memory of his late father Ched, a blind athlete and adventurer who had died in the Himalayas earlier in the year. The huge crowds on the streets and at this celebration gave an indication of what could be expected when the relay reached Sydney, host city for the Games, just over a week later.

On Day 90, Tuesday 5 September, the relay ran south to Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory. Canberra, the nation's capital, is a purpose-built city, elegantly landscaped, with innovative architecture. Canberra is also home to the Australian Institute of Sport, where many Olympic athletes have trained. Many athletes, including Olympians and Paralympians amongst their ranks, carried the Olympic torch throughout the Canberra region.

There was a cold early start to the torch relay on Day 91, as Olympic rowing gold medallist Megan Marcks, nee Still and her husband Gordon rowed the Olympic flame across Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin in their double scull shell.

Still in Canberra on the morning of 7 September, Day 92, the Olympic torch relay stopped briefly at a private Reconciliation gathering at Government House in Yarralumla, home to the Governor-General, Sir William Deane, who would formally open the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games in nine days' time. Attending the gathering was former South African President Nelson Mandela. Dr Mandela held the Olympic torch with Sir William before passing it onto Michael Quail, an indigenous Australian and the Australian Capital Territory's young citizen of the year. Olympic softball player Sally McCreedy then took the torch and continued the relay through the streets of Canberra.

By early afternoon the relay was well on its way towards the Snowy Mountains. September is nearing the end of the winter

The Olympic Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two



56. Nelson Mandela accepts the Olympic flame from Governor General Sir William Deane at Government House in Canberra
57. Residents of Broulee line the streets to watch the torch go by



56
GREG GARAY/SCCCG



57
GREG GARAY/SCCCG

The Olympic
Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two



58



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

58. A local surfer passes torchbearers on Wollongong City Beach

59. Twenty thousand people gather to watch Dorothy Beaupert carry the flame toward the lunchtime celebration in Nowra, New South Wales

alpine season in these mountains, which offer the best skiing in Australia. In the late afternoon the torch arrived at the ski resort of Thredbo in a steep valley facing Mt Crackenback. After the sun had set, Mt Crackenback erupted like a volcano as 400 people, skiing with two red flares each, slalomed down the slope in formation around the torchbearers. Their flares lit up the night sky and the white snow turned to a river of red during the 20 minutes it took for the skiers to reach the bottom of the mountain.

The four mountain torchbearers who skied the flame to safety were Olympians Kim Clifford and Phil Tahmindjis, local Berridale butcher Gordon Jenkinson and the sole survivor of the Thredbo landslide, Stuart Diver. Stuart described this event as another step towards healing following the 1997 disaster which claimed the lives of 17 people, including his wife.

The fireworks display that followed against the backdrop of snow-covered mountains once again likened the mountain to a volcano bursting with colour with booming sounds echoing through the deep valley.

The next day, Friday 8 September, the torch relay moved away from the mountains towards the sea where it travelled north, up the south coast of New South Wales. It was World Reconciliation Day. There were no planned Aboriginal torchbearers in the Bega Valley so a local torchbearer, Chris Allen, gave away his position to run in Candelo to a 17-year-old Koori from Bega, Craig Dixon, in a simple statement supporting Reconciliation.

On 10 September, as the flame continued north towards Sydney, it made its evening stop at seaside Kiama, home to the famous 'blowhole'. Australian surfing legend Tom Carroll, chosen because of his connection with South Coast surfing, lit the community cauldron.

Further north, as the torch relay left the city of Wollongong, 100 Harley Davidson motorbike riders made a corridor through which the torchbearer ran.

The torch was now in its last day outside the 'Olympic city', more than three months after leaving Greece and more than 2500 days since the city won the right to host the Games. It arrived officially in Sydney, entering the southernmost suburb of Waterfall, gateway to what Australians claim is the world's oldest national park, at 3.30 pm on 11 September. In Sydney's southern suburbs it was carried by basketball great Damien Keogh and rugby league legend Andrew Ettingshausen, as well as countless community torchbearers, all unsung champions in their own right. By the time it reached Tonkin Park in Cronulla that evening, more than 25 000 people had gathered, and any lingering worry that the big brash city might be less enthusiastic about the torch than the country was soon dispelled.

59



GREG GARAY/SOCOG

Early in the morning of Day 97 the flame left Kurnell, the birthplace of modern Australia, and travelled through many suburbs on a route indicative of multicultural Sydney. Wearing a turban, Harmohan Singh carried it in Liverpool. It passed through Cabramatta, centre of the Vietnamese community. Earlier, children in legionnaire caps from swimming hero Ian Thorpe's old school in Milperra watched as the torch passed by at the end of the street. Former Olympic decathlon gold medallist Daley Thompson travelled from Great Britain to carry it in Parramatta, where rugby league hero Brad Fittler lit the cauldron.

During the early hours of Day 98, children at Westmead Children's Hospital were woken from their beds to see the flame carried by 71-year-old John Isaac. It then moved onto the Great Western Highway, taking in suburbs of Sydney's west and moving north to the Hills District. From there it made its way to Wahroonga and along the Pacific Highway to Hunters Hill for the evening celebration.

On Thursday 14 September, the day before the Opening Ceremony, the flame was at Bondi Beach, passing from one lifesaving boat to another in the famous surf before lifesaver Jessie Miley-Dyer rode a wave in her boat to carry the torch ashore.

A few days before the torch relay entered the Sydney metropolitan area, New South Wales Premier Bob Carr said, "The Olympic torch relay will provide a defining moment for the city and its people when the flame is borne through the



60

GREG GARAY/SOCOG

The Olympic Torch Relay
Volume Two
Chapter Two



CBD." These words must have resounded across the city, because every day Sydney residents and visitors turned out in their thousands to welcome the Olympic flame, embrace the Olympic spirit and, if they were lucky, touch an Olympic torch.

The torch relay had priority on all roads when it entered the city region, and the CBD stopped at peak hour from Oxford Street through Central Station, Chinatown, George and Elizabeth Streets to the Opera House and across Circular Quay.

At Paddington on the edge of central Sydney, Ben Dodwell, Olympic coxless four rower from the University of Technology, Sydney, Rowing Club, carried the flame high. At his 200 cm height this was an easy task, but he had to drop down on one

60. Christine Anu entertains the crowds at the lunchtime celebrations in Pennant Hills on Day 98. Throughout the journey, masses have lined the roads and joined in on the lunchtime and evening celebrations, showing the torch relay's tremendous impact on the country

61. Jessie Miley-Dyer holds up the torch as a team of Surf Lifesavers give her a ride in toward Bondi Beach



61

SCOTT BARBOURALLSPORT

62



GREG GARAY/SOCCO

knee to hand the flame over to the next torchbearer. She was Lola Harding-Irmer, 86 years old, choreographer of young gymnasts at the 1936 Games in Berlin and chosen to run down Sydney's Oxford Street. On a street famous for drag queens and colourful entertainment, Lola gave a great performance by dancing while carrying the torch. Thousands of people, mostly from the gay community, joined in the performance by chanting 'L-O-L-A'. A huge burst of glittery tape was sprinkled over the crowd and the song *Lola* by the Kinks was played loudly over speakers.

The crowds throughout the Sydney leg of the relay were almost overwhelming. Australian swimming legends from the Melbourne 1956 Games, Dawn Fraser and Murray Rose, renowned for their speed in the pool, refused to be hurried by officials and set their own idiosyncratic pace along the streets with the torch. The Opera House forecourt and surrounding Circular Quay were full to capacity with people straining to get a glimpse of proceedings.

63



ANDREW WONG/REUTERS

Prince Albert of Monaco ran a section on the Sydney Harbour foreshore, and at the Sydney Opera House the flame was held by blind Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli, who would later perform at the special Opera House Torch Gala Concert. He was accompanied on the outdoor stage by torchbearers Olympian Melinda Gainsford-Taylor and pop star Olivia Newton-John. Newton-John carried the flame around the Opera House and met up with Australian tennis ace Pat Rafter. Their backdrop was the Harbour Bridge, lit for the first time with the five Olympic rings and highlighted by fireworks exploding off the bridge pylons. As the sun set, the sky turned red and a full moon rose. The crowd followed the relay through the crowded streets as best they could.

Large-format TV screens at Circular Quay and other city Live Site locations kept the million spectators informed of the whereabouts of the Olympic flame and the identity of the torchbearers. Boos rang out when the torch relay images were taken off the screens and replaced by commentators. Cheers rang out when the relay appeared again. And despite such huge numbers, there was no urgency or antagonism, resulting in the police once again commending the crowd on its behaviour.

64



MARK HORSBURGH/SPORT THE LIBRARY

A Welcome the Torch concert at the Sydney Town Hall complemented the Torch Gala concert at the Sydney Opera House. In between the two locations were other celebration sites where people joined in more informally to witness and experience the Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay.

Golfer Karrie Webb and Lord Mayor Frank Sartor lit the cauldron at Sydney's Town Hall on Opening Ceremony eve, amidst a group of former Lord Mayors and a crowd which cut the Mayor's prepared speech short with a chant of, "Light it! Light it!" As excited as she was to win the US Open golf tournament earlier in the year, Webb had commented after her win, "I'll be as excited when I carry the torch in Sydney the day before the Olympics." Other top sportsmen and women uttered similar sentiments, with Ian Baker-Finch, British Open winner, and rugby union legend David Campese both declaring it was as good as winning a world title.

65



GREG GARA/SCOG

Day 100, 15 September, was the last day of the torch relay. With the Opening Ceremony to take place in the evening, crowd excitement and exuberance surrounding the torch was reaching a crescendo. Thousands of people ignored security and broke barricades to get a closer view of the Great White Shark, Australia's golfing great Greg Norman, carrying the torch on the Sydney Harbour Bridge. After walking slowly through the crushing crowd, he passed the torch to Paralympian Louise Sauvage.

The flame wound its way through the suburbs of the North Shore, over Roseville Bridge to Frenchs Forest, where tennis doubles champions 'the Woodies', Mark Woodford and Todd Woodbridge took turns running with the flame along the Wakehurst Parkway.

So many held barbecue breakfasts along the route that a Frenchs Forest resident, who had lived there all her life, commented that she had never seen the street lined with so many people as on that day. At Collaroy Heights War

Veterans' Retirement Village, the occupational therapists had motivated the residents for months, making banners, rugs and life-size papier-mâché mascots to celebrate the day. One nearby resident had planted a floral display of pansies in the colours and shape of the Olympic rings in her garden.

The flame was carried down the coast and world champion motorcyclist Wayne Gardner put the first torch footprint in the famous sands of Manly Beach, where about 100 000 people had gathered to see Shelley Oates-Wilding light the cauldron.

After the lunchtime celebration next to the pounding Pacific surf, the torch travelled briefly to Taronga Zoo before heading back to Manly and the harbour side of the narrow peninsula. There, Australian Winter Olympian Zali Steggall walked slowly along the sand, carrying the torch to Manly Wharf for a journey up the harbour on one of the city's famous ferries. The large green and gold vessel, capable of carrying 1100 passengers, today housed only a cauldron with the flame and a handful of media representatives and dignitaries. But it was accompanied by a flotilla of hundreds of boats large and small, kayaks, rubber dinghies, surfboats and sailing boats, as it made a one and a half hour journey into Circular Quay, a trip which can take as little as 15 minutes.

Hundreds of thousands had lined the Opera House forecourt and Circular Quay. Amidst tight security, the flame was whisked into a miner's lantern and taken to the Opera House. Popular swimmer Samantha Riley, who had been ill during the trials and had missed out on selection for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, carried the flame to the top of the Opera House sails. After its descent, the flame was back on the waterways as it made its way west by River Cat ferry on its final Australian leg to the Olympic Stadium at Homebush Bay and the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

The Olympic Torch Relay

Volume Two
Chapter Two



66

GREG GARA/SCOG

62. Opposite page: On Day 99, the torch relay pauses in Coogee. Junior lifesavers take time out to take a close look at the torch

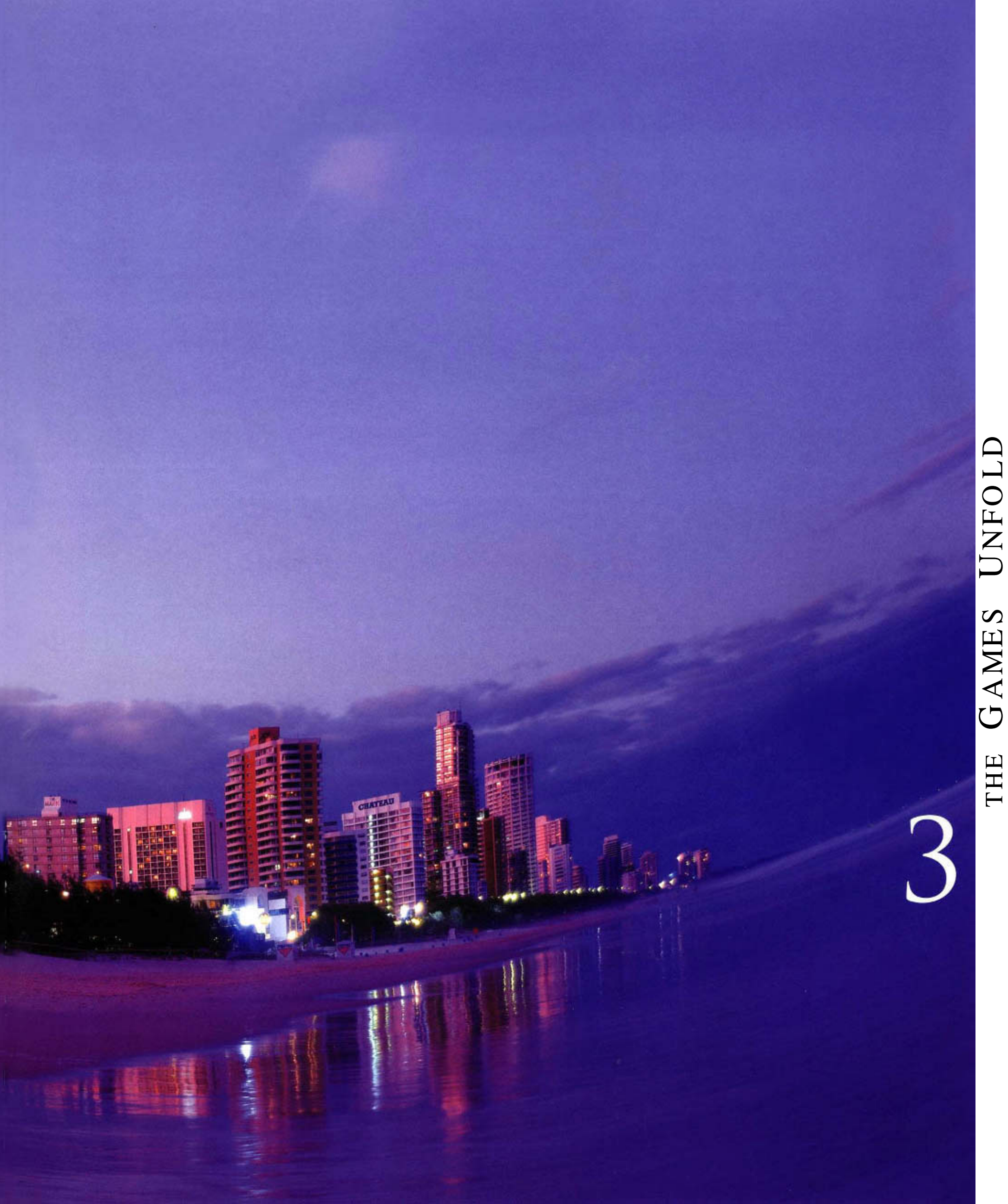
63. Opposite page: As the sun sets behind the Opera House, Sydney student Miriam Wyzenbeek carries the torch along the waterfront at Farm Cove

64. Opposite page: Events of Day 99 culminated with the lighting of the Olympic rings on the Harbour Bridge, accompanied by fireworks. Australian tennis star Pat Rafter and singer Olivia Newton-John pose with the torch

65. As the Opening Ceremony draws closer, the torch stops at Taronga Zoo where Greg Cox shows his torch to a koala while waiting for the flame

66. Hours before travelling to Homebush Bay via ferry, 100000 have gathered on the beach in Manly for the largest lunchtime celebration in the 100-day journey





3

THE GAMES UNFOLD





OPENING CEREMONY

Olympic Stadium

15 September 2000

Olympic Opening Ceremonies often tend to focus on the identities and cultures of the host city and its region. At the Opening Ceremony for the Sydney Olympic Games, a different course was taken. It was a celebration not of the city of Sydney, but of the entire continent of Australia

It was an extraordinarily successful show, and not just because it projected the history, environment and culture of the nation in spectacular fashion. What its organisers managed to do was offer a series of seemingly contradictory approaches to the texture of Australia, and make them blend palatably. On one level it amounted at times almost to a mischievous collage, an exercise in gentle self-mockery. On another it gave prominence to one of the most profound challenges confronting Australia, the issue of Reconciliation between indigenous Australians and the overwhelmingly white population whose first representatives arrived as settlers more than 200 years ago.

That a balancing act of such dimensions was achieved within the context of a ceremony that evoked overwhelming sentiments of pride, wonder and goodwill is a tribute to the creative team, led by the Director of Ceremonies, Ric Birch, and the Artistic Director, David Atkins.

The Ceremony exploded into life with the arrival of a lone horseman, galloping to the centre of Stadium Australia. He paused and surveyed the 110 000 crowd, then his horse reared on its hind legs and the horseman cracked a stockwhip. Suddenly 120 stockhorses and their riders were thundering in to join him, then accompany him in formation across the length of the arena. The men and women riders, aged from 15 to 77, clad in outback uniform of long coats, bushmen's hats, coloured kerchiefs and moleskin pants, carried Olympic flags as they moved through their paces to the theme music of the famous movie *The Man from Snowy River*.

It was a dramatic opening, this arrival of the bush cavalry, and so very appropriate. The horse has a noble history in Australia, and the mounted charges in the stadium carried echoes of the Australian Light Horse Cavalry of the First World War, that man from Snowy. River, the gallantry of the Olympic riders Bill Roycroft in Rome and Wendy Schaeffer in Atlanta, a procession of Melbourne Cups, hopeful punters, sun-squinting drovers, and the rollicking verse of the bush balladeers. To some unrestrained imaginations, the crisp and flawless formation of all those horses into five Olympic circles might even be seen to have represented an unlikely, once-in-a-century encounter between the spirits of the balladeer Banjo Paterson and the visionary Pierre de Coubertin.

Just before the arrival of the Governor-General of Australia, Sir William Deane, and the President of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch, a huge banner unfurled, bearing the simple message 'G'Day' – Australia's laconic greeting to the world. The arrival of the chief dignitaries was the signal for a swinging trumpet fanfare composed and played by one of Australia's most accomplished jazz musicians, James Morrison, accompanied by 20 trumpeters and backed by the 30-strong Swing City band, led by his brother John. The group Human Nature began a distinctive rendition of the national anthem, continued by Julie Anthony and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

After the horses left the arena, the first narrative sequence, *Deep Sea Dreaming*, began. A small Hero Girl – Nikki Webster, a 13-year-old of astonishing talent and versatility – skipped into the arena in a pink sunsuit, carrying a beach towel. She applied sun cream to her nose, stretched, lay down and began to dream. Her dreams afforded the director of this segment, Meryl Tankard, the opportunity to transform the stadium into a deep, brilliant ocean – the kind of ocean that surrounds the island continent. To this end, 11 cables were used, strung 45 m above the arena across the 111 m space between the grandstands on either side.

Opening Ceremony

Volume Two

Chapter Three



1. In a highly symbolic juxtaposition of traditional Aboriginal and contemporary Australian culture, songman Djakapurra Munyaryan leads Nikki Webster through her dream sequences
2. A lone horseman charges into the arena during the Welcome segment, evoking images from *The Man from Snowy River*



2

JAMIE SQUIRE/ALLSPORT

3

Opening Ceremony
Volume Two
Chapter Three



As the Hero Girl soared high above the arena in a special lift harness, swimming and floating and somersaulting through the ocean, she was surrounded by exotic creatures of the deep. Giant translucent jellyfish drifted past her, through her dream, and then various coral cods, angel fish, sea-dragons, stingrays, sea cucumbers, anemones, banana eels, even a fearsome barracuda. Of the 800 people involved in this segment, 150 were schoolchildren taking the part of a giant school of fish. At one stage, as the Hero Girl drifted through the ocean, the face of Australia's famously vocal swimming coach, Laurie Lawrence, appeared on giant screens around the arena, urging kids to swim faster.

The Hero Girl could not swim faster. She was sucked slowly downwards among a swirling mass of fish. White ochre spirits entered the whirlpool and took charge of her, carrying her to a stage where a silhouetted figure was waiting. This was Djakapurra Munyarryun, the Songman and great tribal dancer, who would guide her during the rest of the program through an exploration of Australia's past.

In the next segment, Awakening, the Songman enticed new generations of spirits to emerge from deserts and remote parts

of Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. The spirits were drawn to the heartbeat of the land by a slow-moving, low-shuffling, chanting congregation of 350 Central Desert women. As the women sang *Inma Kungkarankalpa*, the Dance of the Seven Emu Sisters, the land was reborn, red ochre filled the air, fresh groups of spirits were awakened, and other groups moved in to join the corroboree.

Tribesmen from Arnhem Land danced the traditional bush march, used as long as four centuries ago to greet Macassan traders from the north. Flag songs were chanted, calling men and women of Arnhem Land from isolated communities. To a constant, rattling percussion, islanders performed the Aumuller rhythm dance, a celebration of the peoples and energies of the Torres Strait Islands. Other dances followed, the Dhum Dhum dance of the red kangaroo and the Koori clan's dance to the clap of boomerangs.

Young men and women, new generations of the host tribes, revived these ancient songs and dances as they celebrated their survival and welcomed newcomers to their land. To the beat of drums, the clans gathered and burned eucalyptus leaves as they rekindled kinship. Smoke rose into the evening

- 3. *In the Deep Sea*
Dreaming segment, a young girl spreads out her beach towel and starts to dream. Giant fish, stingrays and anemones appear and the girl begins to float among the marine creatures in wonderment
- 4. *With ochre filling the air,*
a spirit called by Djakapurra walks the land during the Awakening segment



BILLY STICKLAND/ALLSPORT



CLIVE BRUNSKILL/ALLSPORT



5

sky, cleansing the Olympic Stadium, which itself was built on land belonging to the Dharug people. As the clans united and rejoiced in their spiritual relationships, the ancestral creation spirit Wandjina hurled a lightning bolt to ignite a bushfire, one that would regenerate the land.

This segment, symbolising the diversity yet unity of Aboriginal peoples, was intended to project the confronting issue of Reconciliation between those who represent Australia's past, and its present. That process reached a watershed four months before the Games, when 250 000 Australians of all backgrounds walked across Sydney Harbour Bridge to symbolise a unity of purpose in achieving Reconciliation.

Wandjina's bolt of lightning engulfed the arena, provoking the short segment called Fire. A huge flame erupted in front of a stage at one end of the stadium, where 140 fire-breathers, 20 flaming stilt-walkers and 40 flaming club-swingers were assembled. They moved off together in stately congress to the sound of rhythmic percussion, driving the fire across the arena. In the centre of the field, all 140 fire-breathers expelled fire in unison to create an inferno. As they continued on their way, the fire was slowly extinguished, leaving just small, blackened clumps of vegetation.

This segment not only celebrated fire as a significant feature and potentially recurring disaster of the Australian landscape, it also celebrated the manner in which nomadic Aborigines traditionally managed the land by fire, using it to control and regenerate the bush. Many of Australia's unique trees

and plants require intense heat to free their seeds from hard, protective casings. The Aborigines burnt small areas to encourage new green shoots, which in turn attracted kangaroos and wallabies. Fire purified the bush, began a new life cycle.

The process of regeneration of the charred earth after rain was the basis of the most colourful segment, Nature, directed by Peter Wilson. Fresh green shoots appeared, plants began to bloom, leaves grew along the branches of the eucalypt trees, as desert and bush and rivers came alive to the strident laugh of the kookaburra and the screeching of parrots. Dominant among the budding, swelling, ultimately blooming flowerbuds were red waratahs, red and black Sturt's Desert peas, pink waterlilies and yellow banksias. Following them came pink and purple honey-myrtles, blue wildflowers and swamp daisies. As the lakes and waterholes of the inland filled, flocks of birds arrived to breed, and then Australia's unique animals came to visit, among them the kangaroo, platypus, echidna and goanna.

Through creative choreography and puppetry, and sequence after sequence of fresh new images, and a continuing fusion of colour, the stadium took on the look of a beautiful living garden. Through this great flowering landscape walked the Songman Djakapurra, stopping at a giant waratah to collect the Hero Girl, who was still dreaming.

The next experience in the journey of this pair through the Australian experience was the Tin Symphony, an inventive,



6

BILLY STICKLAND/ALLSPORT

5. *Choreographed to reflect the beauty of Australia's nature, hundreds of performers form a living garden which fills the arena with life*

6. *12 600 performers volunteered their time to participate in the Opening Ceremony*

Opening Ceremony
Volume Two
Chapter Three



7



BILLY STICKLAND/SPORT

8



JAMIE SOUIRE/ALLSPORT

7. Windmills, watertanks, farm machinery a quadrille of lawnmowers in the Tin Symphony, a highly energetic segment, illustrate the arrival of the new settlers in Australia
8. Performers erect a bridge to serve as the stage for a growing group of tap dancers. Inspired by the industrial-strength tap dancing created by Nigel Triffitt, the Eternity segment united all performers in a giant mandala in the stomping rhythm of the tap dancers

often wildly funny tribute to the impact on the land of the Europeans who arrived after 60 000 years of Aboriginal habitation. This segment, directed by Nigel Jamieson, celebrated not only the vitality and violence of the formative years of settlement, but the mood of that era – its sheer energy, its humour, its sense of 'larrikinism', a distinctively Australian sense of irreverence, wit and mistrust of authority. The emphasis was on the metals the settlers used – corrugated iron to roof their buildings, the steel of industrial and farm machinery and of the famous helmet worn by the nation's most notorious outlaw, Ned Kelly.

Explorers arrived on bicycles, carrying telescopes and sketchbooks, looking in wonder at the flora and fauna. Chorus lines of Ned Kellys on stilts invaded the arena. Windmills, derricks and water tanks took up residence, all made of corrugated iron. Wheat was threshed, sheep shorn, water pumped, rocks ground, timber cut, whips cracked. Gold-rush towns were born. Settlers in braces danced jigs with Irish colleens.

Maybe the most appealing trait of this segment, which applied itself to some critical periods in the nation's history, was its refusal to take itself too seriously. It sent Australia up, fondly and with great zest. Fittingly, it ended with a lawnmower ballet, a kind of serenade to suburbia – its backyards and barbecues.

The history of Australia is one of immigration, and this aspect of the nation's past was celebrated in the next segment, Arrivals, headed by Segment Director Lex Marinos. The participants were 2000 children and 500 adults, representing all the cultures, races, creeds and religions that are now part of the country. The groups cascaded into the arena in the order Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe and Oceania – the five regions that are symbolised by the Olympic rings. Huge masks and spectacular costumes were displayed within those groups.

Although the impact was mainly visual, stunningly so, there were messages. The first was that, although the first non-indigenous Australians were mainly of English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh descent, Australia has long been a truly multicultural community. The second related to the future. For the finale, all the adults disappeared from the arena, leaving behind a vast crowd of children who represent Australia's hope for a future of tolerance and understanding.

The segment that brought the exploration of the country to a close was a salute to its generations of workers: the people who built the docks, roads, bridges, railways, factories, schools, hospitals and homes. It was called Eternity in reference to Arthur Stace, a Sydney identity of the 1930s, a reformed alcoholic who found Christianity and spent most of his days chalking the word 'Eternity' in loving copperplate on pavements and buildings all over the city.

The accent throughout this segment, directed by Nigel Triffitt, was on tap dancing. A solo dancer, Adam Garcia, led a crew of workers through the construction of a 30 m high bridge. As foreman, he was joined at first by 150 dancers, all from the casts of the musicals *Tap Dogs*, *Hot Shoe Shuffle* and *Steel City*. They were joined on the scaffolds by another 500 tap-dancers, then by another 500 in the aisles. The whole effect was one of intricate rhythms building to a crescendo.

The completed bridge was the Bridge of Life, a walkway towards connection and Reconciliation. As the structure was completed, performers from every section of the Opening Ceremony stormed onto the arena, gathering to form a giant multicoloured mandala. Djakapurra and the little girl, together again, rose high in the air. As the performers bade farewell, the Sydney Harbour Bridge appeared, with the word 'Eternity' scrawled across its steel arch – as had happened on the actual Harbour Bridge once before, on New Year's Eve, 1999. The journey was complete.

Next came the entry of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Band, a 2000-piece ensemble custom-built for just this ceremony. It was made up of performers, teenagers and young adults from 20 countries around the world: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Fiji, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden,

Switzerland, Tonga, Great Britain and the United States. They had been rehearsing in their own countries for two years, and met only nine days before this performance to live and train together as a unit.

Wearing red, white and blue raincoats and wide-brimmed hats, the band marched onto the arena to the thudding of hundreds of drums, then played a medley of tunes as they moved in formation, at one stage forming the Olympic logo. The medley included *Thus Sprach Zarathustra*, 'Chariots of Fire', 'Ode to Joy', 'Bugler's Dream', 'Waltzing Matilda' and 'Olympic Fanfare and Theme '84'. When they marched to the northern end of the stadium and assembled there, it was the signal for the Parade of the Athletes to begin.

As is customary, Greece, home of the Ancient Olympic Games and birthplace of the Modern Games, led the march, which included 10 500 athletes and 5000 officials from 199 countries. Afterwards, from Albania to Zimbabwe, the nations paraded in English alphabetical order – with two exceptions. Australia, as host nation, was last into the arena, and the tiny East Timor team preceded it.

If any delegations demonstrated superbly the embrace of Olympic goodwill, they were those of East Timor and the two Koreas. East Timor, so recently devastated by civil war, fielded a team without its own flag, without an anthem, without a uniform. There were just four athletes, and they paraded behind a flag bearing the initials IOA (International Olympic Athletes) to a magnificent reception from the crowd.

The athletes of the two Koreas, although competing in the Games as separate nations, marched together, with one athlete from the North and another from the South leading the contingent, holding hands. Others behind, from both sides of the border, locked hands as they marched – and their presence together caused spectators to rise to their feet in salute as they passed.

The band played distinctive songs to welcome athletes from 27 of the larger nations – 'Born in the USA' and 'Stars and Stripes Forever' for the USA, 'Pomp and Circumstance March' for Great Britain, 'Guantanamera' for Cuba, 'Les Miserables' for France, 'Brazil' for Brazil. Smaller nations were greeted by such tunes as 'March of the Olympians' and 'Chariots of Fire'. For the Australians there were tunes like 'The Land Down Under', 'The Road to Gundagai' and 'Waltzing Matilda'. At the conclusion of the Parade of Athletes, John Farnham and Olivia Newton-John sang the inspirational 'Dare to Dream'.

After speeches of welcome by IOC President Samaranch who began with the words, "G'day Sydney, G'day Australia" and the President of SOCOG, Minister Knight, Sir William Deane declared open the Games of the XXVII Olympiad. An enormous Olympic flag, which had been passed over the heads of spectators in the stand at one end of the ground, moved across the centre of the arena to cover the heads of all the athletes, who were assembled mid-field. As it did, Vanessa Amorosi sang 'Heroes Live Forever'.

Then the official Olympic flag made its entrance, carried by eight Australian Olympians who had between them won 17

Opening Ceremony

Volume Two
Chapter Three



10

DAVID LEAHALLSPORT



11

CLIVE BRUNSKILLSPORT



12

CLIVE BRUNSKILLSPORT

9. Nikki Webster faces the Endeavour Horse which enters the Stadium at the end of the Nature segment as the harbinger of the Tin Symphony
10. In holding with tradition, the Greek team is the first to enter the Stadium during the parade of athletes
11. The Australian Olympic team is greeted with a roar from 110 000 spectators as they enter the arena
12. In a historic moment, North and South Korea march into the opening ceremony together, united under one flag



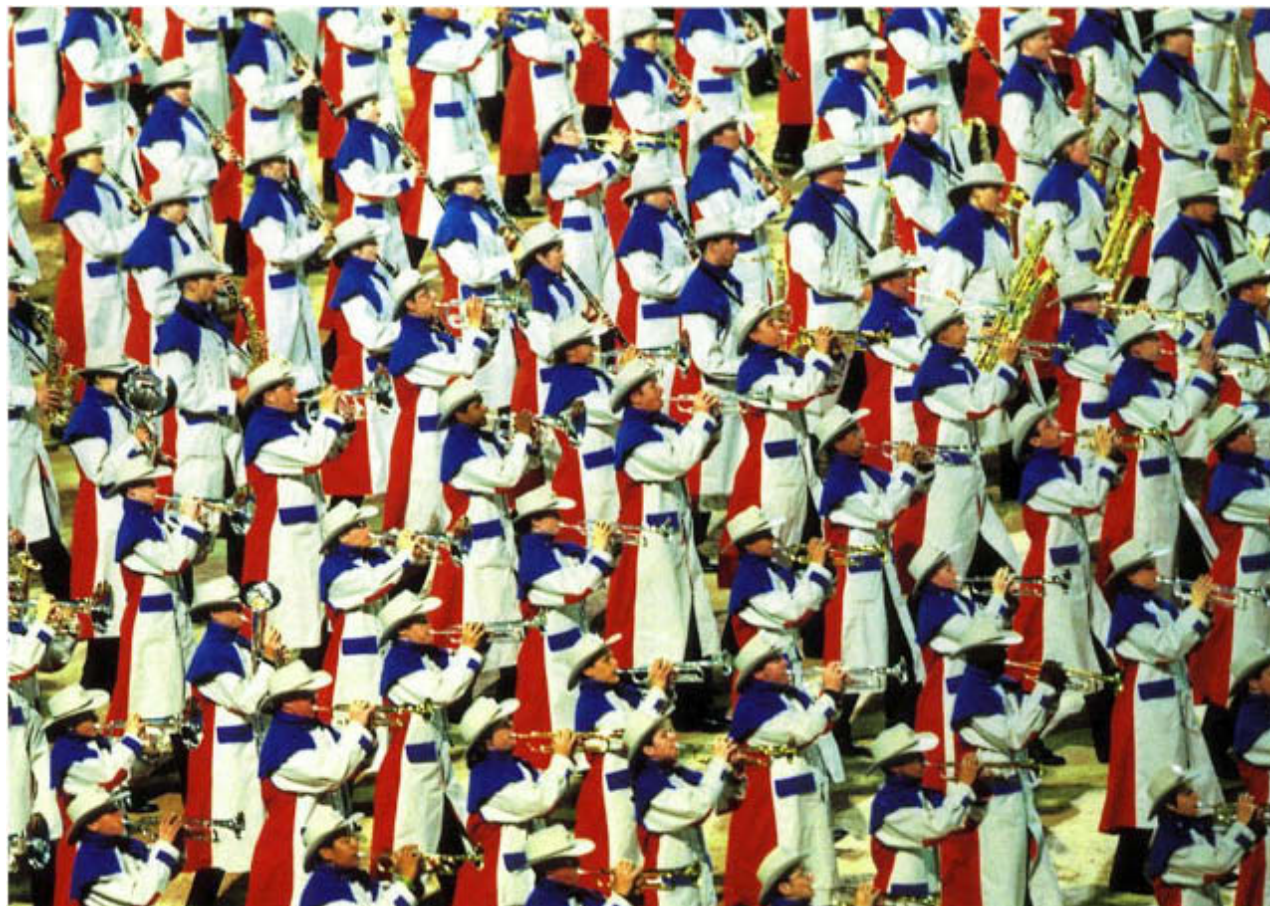
9

GARY M. FRIORALLSPORT

Opening Ceremony
Volume Two
Chapter Three



13



SHAUN BOTTERILL/ALLSPORT

gold medals. They were Bill Roycroft (1 gold), Murray Rose (4), Liane Tooth (2), Gillian Rolton (2), Marjorie Jackson (2), Lorraine Crapp (2), Michael Wenden (2) and Nick Green (2). They carried the flag counterclockwise around the stadium, until they reached the ceremonial flagpole. As the flag was raised, the 200-strong Millennium Children's Choir of the Greek Archdiocese of Australia sang the traditional Olympic Hymn in Greek.

Betty Cuthbert, heroine of the Melbourne 1956 Olympic Games and now a victim of multiple sclerosis, was the first torchbearer inside the stadium, in a wheelchair pushed by Raelene Boyle. The torch went then to legends Dawn Fraser, Shirley Strickland and Shane Gould before being passed to Debbie Flintoff-King, the last Australian woman to win gold on the athletic track before Sydney. Between them the members of that group have won 15 gold medals. Each had a short, dignified run with the precious cargo before a hug and a changeover.

14



CLIVE BRUNS/ALLSPORT

13. A 2000-piece marching band, assembled from 20 countries, plays tunes throughout the parade of athletes

14. The Olympic flag is solemnly carried into the Stadium, held by eight Australian Olympians: Bill Roycroft, Murray Rose, Gillian Rolton, Majorie Jackson, Lorraine Crapp, Michael Wenden and Nick Green

15. Commemorating 100 years of women's participation in the Olympic Games, sporting legends Betty Cuthbert and Raelene Boyle carry the torch on the end of its long journey before lighting the cauldron

Next came a solemn ritual that has been part of the Olympic program since Antwerp in 1920: the declaration of oaths. Rechelle Hawkes, captain of the Australian women's hockey team and a double gold medallist, pronounced the athletes' oath, one that contained a reference to the issue of drugs. "In the name of all competitors," she said, "I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, committing ourselves to a sport without doping and without drugs, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honour of our teams." The Australia water polo official, Peter Kerr, then took an oath of impartiality on behalf of all judges and officials.

When Flintoff-King handed the torch to Cathy Freeman, clad in a space-age body suit, the huge audience erupted with a

Finally came the entry of the Olympic Flame as Tina Arena sang 'The Flame', signalling the last stage of a relay which had begun in Ancient Olympia nearly five months earlier, and had explored 27 000 km of Australia during the previous 99 days. It had been carried by nearly 11000 torchbearers in Australia, and generated enormous goodwill. Now, inside the stadium for its final lap, it was in the hands of a medley of some of Australia's greatest female athletes. This carriage of the last torch was designed to commemorate a century of women's participation in the Games. Appropriately, it also served as a reminder of the huge contribution women have made to Australian Olympic history.



DAVID LEAH/ALLSPORT

15

massive roar of delight and excitement. For more than a year the identity of the last torchbearer had been the subject of intense speculation and anticipation. The choice of Freeman meant that the Australian relay, which had begun with one indigenous Australian, Nova Peris-Kneebone, had ended with another. At the end of a ceremony that had emphasised Aboriginal heritage and addressed the issue of Reconciliation, the presence of Freeman in such a vital role made a powerful statement. Many saw it as representing a special moment in the nation's history.

Freeman ascended four flights of stairs, carrying the torch, then walked across a shallow circular pond to an island in the centre, where she dipped the torch low, then swept it around

her to ignite a ring of fire. The pond in fact concealed the submerged cauldron, and the circle of fire consisted of 150 nozzles around the rim of its gas-burner. As she stood motionless, the now-flaming cauldron rose around and above her. The whole tableau amounted to a lovely marriage of fire and water. Freeman walked from the pond and stood solitary, torch aloft, for what seemed an eternity, as the cauldron waited to be transported towards its place above the stadium. Finally it made its slow, majestic voyage upwards, via a winch system, against a waterfall background.

The Games of the XXVII Olympiad had their flame for the next 16 days. Sydney, and Australia, had a memory that would last for at least 110 000 lifetimes.

Opening Ceremony

Volume Two
Chapter Three



16

MIKE POWELL/SPORT

16. In a touching and impressive moment, Cathy Freeman lights the Olympic cauldron which then ascended to the top of the Olympic Stadium





DAY 1 – SATURDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

The Opening Ceremony was a multi-coloured, ever-changing circle in motion. Its use of the symbol of the circle set the scene for all 16 days of the Games.

Day 1 of the Sydney 2000 Games was like a circle of friendship, unifying diverse people and groups. It was on this first day of the Games that the issue of increasing unity was highlighted. The focus was on the inclusion of women in the Games, the participation of young people in sport, and Reconciliation in Australia between Aborigines and non-indigenous Australians.

The Games of the XXVII Olympiad began under sunny skies, with a sense of keen anticipation. The dazzling Opening Ceremony had drawn the eyes of the world to Sydney, and on Day 1 the city continued to enchant. It was adorned with Olympic banners, bright flowers, huge Olympic rings on the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and other evidence of the festival of sport and culture that was now under way. The Spring Walk in the Royal Botanic Gardens, now in full bloom, delighted visitors. The 'look' of the Games had been carefully planned, and the effects of this planning added to the mood of festivity.

Thousands began making their way to the sporting venues early that day. Sydney had already broken the record for ticket sales at the beginning of Day 1, with 84 per cent of available tickets gone, surpassing Barcelona's mark of 82.3 per cent for the 1992 Games.

The morning newspapers celebrated the excitement of the previous night. Members of the public shared their experiences, as they had the night before while viewing the Opening Ceremony. Athletes and spectators at the Opening Ceremony had established something of a record for mobile phone usage. They made 125 000 calls during the four-hour spectacle.

On Day 1 congratulations poured in from around the world. Billions of people had seen the Opening Ceremony worldwide. It was the most-watched television program in Australian history, attracting 10.4 million viewers across the country, including 72 per cent of the Sydney viewing audience. This number did not include the thousands who watched on the large television screens in the six Olympic Live Sites strategically placed in Sydney's city centre.

The themes of the Opening Ceremony were a talking point as the Games began. The ceremony had echoed the torch relay's focus on the inclusion of all Australians, and recent Australian efforts at dialogue and Reconciliation with the Aboriginal people. The last torchbearer at the ceremony, Cathy Freeman, was an Aboriginal Olympian. Another Aboriginal Olympian, Nova Peris-Kneebone, had carried the torch from Uluru, the spiritual and geographical centre of the country. When she lit

the Olympic cauldron, Freeman ignited a ring of fire within a waterfall, showing that even opposing elements can be brought into harmony. Prime Minister John Howard underlined this message in his official welcome: "It is the Olympic spirit that informs us that the things that unite nations are far greater than the things that divide them."

The Sydney 2000 Games acknowledged that ceremonial inclusion does not on its own mitigate material and social injustice. Aboriginal people not only contributed to the Games, but also were able to make use of the Games to highlight their causes. The Aboriginal Cultural and Information Centre at Sydney Olympic Park introduced the world to Aboriginal culture, and gave visitors a look at Australian history from the Aboriginal point of view. It also presented a display of indigenous artworks and craft. An Aboriginal Tent Embassy was established in inner-city Victoria Park, to serve as a gathering place for protest and intervention. The aspirations of Australia's indigenous peoples were also underscored by an exhibition of the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists at the Museum of Contemporary Art near Circular Quay.

The first high-profile gold medal event of the Sydney 2000 Games, the women's triathlon, highlighted women's achievements and the promise of the new century. The Sydney 2000 Games commemorated the anniversary of 100 years of women's participation in the Olympic Games. At the Paris Olympic Games of 1900, 21 women had participated in three sports: yachting, golf and tennis. At Sydney, 4249 women competed, 38.3 per cent of all participants, up from 34 per cent in Atlanta, in 44 per cent of the events. A record 132 medal events for women, including 12 mixed, were contested at these Games. Of the 35 nations that had sent male-only teams to the last Olympic Games in Atlanta, 17 included women in their teams for Sydney. It was the first

3



TANVA KORREY/CITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES

Day 1

Volume Two
Chapter Three



1. The Olympic flame, ignited during the Opening Ceremony, will burn throughout the 16 days of competition
2. Swiss colours dominated the victory ceremony of the women's triathlon. Brigitte McMahon (left), gold medallist, celebrates with bronze medallist Magali Messmer
3. Sydney's icon, the Opera House, was the centre of the triathlon, with changeovers, start and finish all taking place on the forecourt



RUSSELL BOYCE/REUTERS

Day 1

Volume Two
Chapter Three



ANDY LYONS/ALLSPORT



GEORGE SALPITTO/NEWS LTD

4. On Day 1, the beach volleyball competition kicked off to a sunny start. Tania Gooley and Pauline Manser of Australia sign autographs after their victory against Italy in the elimination round

5. An Australian fan cheers on the women during the triathlon. Fans of all nationalities lined the streets and filled the Olympic venues

6. Closely watched by the nation and his mother Aphrodite, Atlanta gold medalist Michael Diamond becomes the first qualifier in the men's trap shooting event

7. East Timorese weightlifter Martinho de Araujo poses for a photo during practice for the men's 56 kg division



STU FORSTER/ALLSPORT

time, for example, that Bahrain, an Arab Gulf nation, had sent women to the Games. This country with deeply embedded beliefs about the need for physical modesty in women sent two female athletes for sports that allow for very little modesty in terms of dress. The chosen athletes were two young girls, a 16-year-old runner and a 12-year-old swimmer, the youngest athlete competing at the Games. A female chaperone accompanied them.

There were many firsts at the Games of the new Millennium. The Sydney Games had modern pentathlon, weightlifting, water polo, taekwondo and triathlon events for women for the first time. There were 300 medal events in Sydney, 29 more than at Atlanta, the largest increase in Olympic history, and 23 new events had been added as a result of the IOC's commitment to increasing the number of women participating in the Games. Several IFs added new disciplines, such as synchronized diving and trampoline. The introduction of triathlon and taekwondo also contributed to the growing diversity and inclusiveness of the Games.

Triathlon was a fitting sport with which to begin the Games. The race was heartstopping from start to finish. Australia's hope, Michellie Jones, was defeated by Brigitte McMahon from Switzerland in a very close finish. Magali Messmer of Switzerland finished third.

Later, to link in with the triathlon, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra gave a free concert at the Domain, playing to a capacity crowd. The program featured popular classics and a commissioned work from Australian composer Graeme Koehne. This was the first of six major concerts during the Games, aimed at celebrating the Games, bringing people together, and displaying Australia's cultural talents.

At the Live Sites across the city, people basked in the sun in front of giant television screens, swarmed the arts and culture events, and picnicked in the parks. Thousands of others made their way to the venues to watch the first sporting events.

For athletes and spectators, public transportation functioned smoothly. The demand upon the system was immense. On the very first day public transport had to move 1.3 million



PETER STOOP/THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

spectators, an increase of 37 per cent over the demand on an ordinary workday. It passed the test.

In the days leading up to the Games, a worrying shortage of buses and bus drivers had become apparent, especially of drivers who knew the routes of Sydney. An appeal sent out for additional volunteers proved overwhelmingly successful. Numerous Sydneysiders, mostly retired taxi and bus drivers, volunteered to be navigators.

The Games began with a personal crisis for IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch. He returned to Barcelona, summoned to the bedside of his desperately ill wife. This was President Samaranch's last Olympic Games in his official capacity – his term as President would be terminating in 2001. He had strongly supported triathlon's inclusion in the Games, but was unable to witness the sport's dramatic debut. IOC Vice-President Richard Pound of Canada was named Acting President in his absence.

A minor incident on this first day was a magpie attack on staff at the Aquilina Reserve softball venue. Three officials were slightly injured, and magpie catchers from the National Parks and Wildlife Service had to be called in to remove the offending birds. Seagulls, fruit-bats and cockatoos, possums, pelicans and snakes reminded visitors the bush was never far away from the city in Sydney.

The other sports to begin on Day 1 were aquatics, archery, badminton, basketball, beach volleyball, boxing, cycling, equestrian, fencing, gymnastics, hockey, handball, judo, shooting, table tennis, volleyball and weightlifting. They offered magic moments to crowds already dazzled by the Opening Ceremony, the magnitude of the Games, and the splendour of the host city.

Magic Sporting Moments

Lifting Spirits

At the very outset of competition, history was made. A weightlifter from East Timor, Martinho de Araujo, was the first athlete from the former Indonesian territory to compete at an Olympic Games. He came last in his event, but he was exultant. "Today I lifted not only weights but my country as well."

The Wheel of Chance

Track cycling time trials showed an excited crowd how unpredictable the results can be at an Olympic Games. Favourite Felicia Ballanger from France won gold in the women's event, but the men's winner was the unheralded Jason Queally of Great Britain.

The Stars Favour Sydney

Russian Federation fencer Pavel Kolobkov found Sydney lucky for him. He had won medals in Seoul, Barcelona and Atlanta, but gold had eluded him. Now he ended his 12-year quest for gold, winning the men's individual épée.

Sporting Firsts in Sydney

First Olympic Medal

Kyrgyzstan won its first Olympic medal ever, on a day of glory for Japan in judo. The Japanese swept the gold medals before a packed crowd of Japanese supporters. Nomura Tadahiro retained the men's 60 kg title, flipping Jung Bu-Kyung of Korea for an ippon. Manolo Poulot of Cuba and Aidyn Smagulov of Kyrgyzstan won bronze.

New Swimming Records

Records fell in every final in swimming at the Aquatic Centre. Ukraine's Yana Klochkova won gold in the women's 400 m individual medley event with a new world record. The USA won gold and regained the world record from China in the women's 4 x 100 m freestyle relay.

And Day 1 saw the creation of a new Australian hero. Sydney teenager Ian Thorpe won the 400 m freestyle, lowering his

own world record. He also claimed Australia's first gold medal of the Sydney 2000 Games with his powerful performance. Then came the men's 4 x 100 m freestyle relay, the climax to the first day of competition, in which American-Australian rivalry created an electric tension for 6.6 million viewers. Thorpe anchored the Australian team to a gold, and a world record. He capped his sensational double gold medal day by touching out American Gary Hall Jr in world record time. The USA had its first defeat in the event in Olympic history. Thorpe extended both arms to the cheering, stamping crowd, including them in his success and the elation of the moment. By the next day, a postage stamp featuring the young swimmer and his victories was on sale at Sydney Olympic Park.

Setting the Scene for the Games

At the close of the first day of competition, the scene for the Sydney 2000 Games had been set. Significant groups were being celebrated – women at the Games, Australia's first people, and smaller nations struggling towards national unity.

The Games themselves were being celebrated too. The city's sporting venues and Live Sites were alive with visitors eager to maintain the exhilaration evoked by the Opening Ceremony. And they were not disappointed.

They found good facilities at the venues and the Live Sites, smoothly running transport, falling records and rising amity between people from different backgrounds. New friendships were forming in a great city that had invited the world to join it in celebrating sporting excellence and increasing harmony.

Day 1

Volume Two
Chapter Three



8. As the Olympic boxing contest begins at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, legendary Muhammed Ali is cheered by the crowd assembled to watch the 54 kg bout between Theimurz Khurtsilava of Georgia and Aram Ramazyan of Armenia

9. Crowds enjoy the sunshine and entertainment at the Olympic Live Site at the Domain



8

CHARLIE KRUPAVAP



9

EVA RODRIGUEZ/RESTRACITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES





DAY 2 – SUNDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

In the Opening Ceremony's Fire segment, dancers moved in the darkness, tiny points of light circling through the blackness. Then came the Nature segment, transforming the circle of darkness and destruction to one of creation and abundance, and celebration of nature's variety.

Day 2 of the Games was a compound of contrasting elements. There was elation lingering from the previous day, and there was sorrow when the day began with news of a death.

Friend of the Olympic Movement 'Bibis' (Maria Teresa) Salisachs-Rowe had died of cancer at 67 after a long illness. Wife of IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch, Mrs Samaranch was a tireless supporter of the President's demanding and far-flung activities, and an ardent advocate of the Olympic Movement. Her husband, who left for Barcelona immediately after the Opening Ceremony, had not managed to arrive home before her death. Flags at Olympic venues were lowered to half-mast for 24 hours to express the heartfelt sympathy of those in Sydney, and their admiration for the way President Samaranch had carried out his responsibilities for the IOC Session and the Opening Ceremony despite his concern for his wife.

A Chain of Goodwill

In outer appearance, the city on Day 2 was carefree, ready for more excitement. Again it was a day of sunshine and balmy temperatures, several degrees higher than average. The city's residents were in holiday mood, open to the new experiences of an Olympic Games in their city. Throngs of visitors – an estimated eight million people visited Sydney during the Games – mingled, conversed and partied with Sydney residents on the trains and buses, at the venues and at the Live Sites. Museums, art galleries and parks were crowded as people without tickets for events thronged to the city centre to join in the excitement.

Over 85 per cent of tickets had been sold by Day 2, and this total would be exceeded by the end of the Games. A sense of elation and anticipation bore visitors to the sporting venues, and kept the crowds patient and good natured as they waited for security checks and then moved in great throngs down the huge boulevards to their first venue.

The Live Sites, six spacious areas in the city centre, were ideal meeting places, with large screens – as big as 30 sq m – for viewing the events, places to eat or picnic, information booths and other facilities to support the participation of the entire city in the Games and provide a tangible link with Sydney Olympic Park at Homebush Bay. The Sites were an instant success, spreading the festive spirit across the city. They spread their arms across the harbour, gathering visitors

to join in celebrating the Games being played out in the city's inland heart. They formed a span of well-wishers, gathered together to forge a giant chain of goodwill across the city.

During the Opening Ceremony, 40 000 people had watched the screen at Martin Place in the city, and 10 000 at Tumbalong Park in Darling Harbour. Thousands more had to be turned away. On Day 2, most of the viewing areas had reached capacity by lunchtime. At Belmore Park, across from Central Railway Station, the huge railway junction in the inner city, people picnicked and sunbathed on the large green carpet installed for the Games. Between 1 pm and 4 pm, more than 100 000 visited the Live Sites.

During the course of the Games, over 1.5 million people used the Live Sites. A sense of community was born at these offshoots of the main events.

Visitors drawn to the Live Sites were also drawn to the central city, and became familiar with its important icons – the Opera House, the Rocks, Circular Quay, the Royal Botanic Gardens, the Domain parklands, Parliament House, Town Hall and the Harbour Bridge – because of their proximity.

To buoy the spirit of the crowds and give a sense of immediacy, a wide range of live performers provided entertainment at the Sites – acrobats, pole-vaulters, stand-up comedians and indigenous bands with the insistent, stirring thrum of the didgeridoo.

Sporting venues not located at Sydney Olympic Park also featured live entertainment, so that one could imagine a giant Mexican wave crossing and re-crossing the city for 16 action-

Day 2
Volume Two
Chapter Three



2

MATT TURNER/ALLSPORT



3

GRAHAM EDWARDS/CITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES

1. A street theatre group, dressed as the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge and Sydney Tower entertain bypassers
2. The Olympic flag is lowered at the Olympic Stadium to mourn the death of Maria Teresa Salisachs-Rowe, wife of the IOC President
3. A mother and her daughter have found a perfect spot on Macquarie Street to observe the men's triathlon competition

Day 2
Volume Two
Chapter Three



4. Sydney's multicultural community caters for visitors from almost every country in the world. Starting during the Bid, the Chinese community in particular has been very supportive of the Games
5. While the start of the athletics competition is still five days away, Cathy Freeman and Nova Perris-Kneebone warm up for their training at the Athletics Centre
6. The Australian women's gymnastics team fit in a last round of practice before the commencement of the gymnastics competition later that day



CHRIS ELFES/SPORT THE LIBRARY

filled days. The Darling Harbour Live Site helped to popularise this precinct, which was the venue for several sports, making it seem an integral part of Sydney Olympic Park even though geographically distanced, and giving visitors the sense of being an integral part of the Olympic spectator population.

At other points in the city, around 80 groups with an ethnic focus were offering hospitality and cultural programs to participants in the Games, their families and the public in general. Like many other groups, the Sydney Ghanaian community gave welcome and farewell receptions for the team from their home country.

The local St Lucia Cultural Association gave athletes from St Lucia their first opportunity to leave the Olympic Village and see Sydney, hosting an afternoon meal and party at Greenwich Park. The Sydney Chinese Community hosted a dinner to celebrate the medals won by the Chinese team, and the Sydney Jewish community organised a series of social events for the Israeli team and a display of the history of the Jewish people of the city.

Many visitors found welcoming echoes of their own cultural identity in this cosmopolitan city. A diversity of backgrounds and cultural ties to other countries is a Sydney characteristic – there are, for example, 62 500 Chinese-born people living in the city and 65 000 second-generation Chinese, 78 000 Indian-born, 23 000 Japanese-born and 90 000 Dutch-born (figures from the 1996 Census).



JOE ARMAO/FAIRFAX



TRENT PARKER/FAIRFAX

Athletes and team officials had the opportunity to touch base with their home culture and celebrate success at national meeting sites throughout the city. The South Africans gathered at the Daintree Cafe in Cockle Bay. Close by, Holland Heineken House was awash with orange tulips in anticipation of Dutch victories. At Club France, near the Rocks, chefs from France stood by to prepare celebratory receptions each time a French athlete won a medal. Canada Olympic House at Macquarie University in Ryde was also a popular gathering place.

Drug Testing

Sad news had earlier punctuated the excitement of the day; now came a sobering report from the Olympic Village. A Ukrainian shot putter and the entire Romanian weightlifting team had been expelled from the Games because of positive tests to banned drugs. The Romanian team was expelled after two of its lifters tested positive.

The International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) had tested all 257 competing weightlifters before the Games. According to IWF rules, the entire team is to be expelled if three or more of its athletes test positive within a 12-month period. In May 1999, world champion Razvan Ilie of Romania had tested positive. The Romanians disputed the decision to disqualify the team and the IWF relented, allowing the athletes who had not tested positive to compete on the condition that the team pay a fine of A\$91 000. This was promptly done.

Sporting Firsts in Sydney

First Italian Swimmer to Win Gold

Domenico Fioravanti became the first swimmer to win gold for Italy when he captured the men's 100 m breaststroke, overtaking pre-race favourites Ed Moses of the USA and world record-holder Roman Sloudnov of the Russian Federation. It was a tense race, with the lead changing constantly. Expectations of a Russian Federation–US battle for the win had been defied, and this heightened the excitement.

First Women's Gold Medal for Weightlifting

Bulgaria's Izabela Dragneva, with a snatch of 85 kg and a clean and jerk of 105 kg, won the first women's gold medal for weightlifting. Due to a positive drug test, however, Dragneva was later disqualified and the gold was awarded to Tara Nott of the USA.

A Place to Break Your Own Records

The Aquatic Centre was proving "the best place for swimming in the world", in the words of Tom Dolan of the USA, who successfully defended his Atlanta title in the men's 400 m individual medley, breaking his own world record in the process. Dolan had battled a virus for weeks. He embraced his teammate who was the silver medallist Erik Vendt and sat on the lane ropes with his arms raised in celebration.

The Netherlands' Inge de Bruijn had her first success that night, breaking her own world record, in the women's 100 m butterfly. The crowd cheered, aware of her unsuccessful attempts to win gold at both Barcelona and Atlanta. "The world record is there to be broken, but a gold medal, nobody can take that away from you," said the delighted swimmer.

Magic Sporting Moments

A Dramatic Finish

In the last 250 m of the inaugural men's triathlon, outside the Sydney Opera House, Canadian Simon Whitfield found the energy to make up a 10 m lead by Germany's Stephan Vuckovic and then sprint past him. "I was always thinking about doing this for Canada," Whitfield said, referring to the previous day when his female triathlon team-mates, Carol Montgomery and Sharon Donnelly, were injured in bicycle accidents during the women's race. Over 230 000 had spread throughout the city, cheering participants as they passed in their pursuit of victory. A free country music spectacular was held at the Domain to celebrate the triathlon.

As Good as New

As athletes slow with age, they usually compete in longer races. But Brooke Bennett of the USA showed that an older athlete can step down a distance, too. The Atlanta winner of the women's 800 m freestyle won the 400 m freestyle in Sydney, leading from start to finish.

Good Shot, Australia!

Michael Diamond defended his Atlanta title in men's trap shooting, hitting the target with every shot. His overall score was 147 out of a possible 150. Diamond credited his win to his father and mentor Constantine, who had died only a short time before the Games. "I've heard his words all through the Olympic Games," said Diamond.

Turnabout

In the men's judo competition, Huseyin Ozkan of Turkey beat Larbi Benboudaoud of France, reversing the positions the two competitors had taken in the world championships previously.

More Impact than a Knockout

East Timor's Victor Ramos, lightweight boxer, didn't land a single punch in the first round. But his team manager said, "The message he sent by making it into the ring made more impact than any knockout blow."



7

TONY FEDERALSPORT

Love Will Find the Way

Longshot Timea Nagy of Hungary, seeded 13, won the individual épée championship. Afterwards, she admitted that she had only taken up fencing because she had a crush on a fencer, underlining the fact that many take up sport to maintain and gain friendships.

A Buzz in the Air at Bondi

A friendly spirit came in with the sea breeze at the Bondi Beach volleyball facility. Players and visitors alike gave rave reviews to the natural setting and raucous atmosphere, produced by rock music, sun, sand and a happy international crowd of 10 000. Residents spoke of, "a buzz in the air, a buzz on the street".

Brazil's Emanuel Rego compared the crowd noise to a soccer stadium in the way it came in from all sides. "I've played in some good places," he said, "but this is incredible." Brazilian musicians stirred the crowd to delight and frenzy, making the breaks as entertaining as the matches themselves. All four of Brazil's teams – two men's and two women's – advanced to the next round, the best result of any country.

Day 2, which had started with sad news, ended on a high note. The Sydney Olympic Games party was on, and everyone was invited.

Day 2
Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day
2

7. Bondi was the centre of attention for all beach volleyball fans, where a Brazilian band is warming up the crowds with catchy tunes
8. Attracted by the sun and party atmosphere, Maurice Greene stops by Bondi Beach and signs autographs for fans
9. Beachgoers and surfers are not distracted by the Olympic competition in the background



8

TONY FEDERALSPORT

9



MIKE POWELL/ALLSPORT





DAY 3 – MONDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

The spectacle of the Opening Ceremony had two major features: the individual beauty of each minute element – mask, musical note, movement – and the splendid overall circle of colour these elements produced in combination.

The Games themselves were composed of smaller moments of magic within a vast, all-encompassing plan. And by Day 3 it was becoming evident what factor was responsible for fusing these moments into an overall harmony.

It was the goodwill and hard work of the people behind the scenes, the volunteers, that gave the Sydney 2000 Games its sense of unity and sound organisation. The sports world has always been sustained by the energy and hard work of volunteers, but the contribution of the volunteers to the Sydney Olympic Games was exceptional. "They are the real story of these Games," one hockey official said.

Day 3 began with a service at St Patrick's Church in the city centre. More than 800 people, including members of the Olympic Family and the Australian government, gathered to mourn the death of Maria Teresa Salisachs-Rowe, wife of IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch. The memorial service was conducted by Father Paul Cooney and Austrian Olympic team chaplain Father Bernhard Maier, who wore robes decorated with the five Olympic rings. President Samaranch was expected to return to Sydney before the end of the Games.

But the general mood was one of high optimism. The weather was once again fine, the skies a cheery blue. In fact, the day was so warm – an unseasonable 30°C in some areas – that athletes said the heat affected their performance. At the equestrian venue, snakes appeared from the adjoining bush.

The first regular business day in Sydney since the Games started, Day 3 began with a rush of commuters into and out of the city. The rail system alone had to carry a record 1.6 million passengers – the usual figure for a day such as this would be 920 000. The regular bus services were also under extra pressure, as 16 cross-town routes had been cancelled to make buses available for the Olympic routes.

The volunteers were on hand to help set the process in motion. With their help and friendly directions to the crowds, the transit system passed this vital test, carrying both Olympic spectators and normal commuters. There were only minor delays.

However, an unexpectedly large number of spectators used their own vehicles to arrive at Horsley Park, the equestrian competition venue. Of the 50 000 attending the cross-country event, 37 000 travelled by car, backing up traffic on the M4 motorway. Another unexpected jam occurred at the park-and-ride at the Australia's Wonderland theme park, where at one

point, more than 5000 stood in the queue for shuttle buses. The Olympic Roads and Traffic Authority (ORTA) announced that it would revise its plans for the facility, while reiterating its advice that spectators should travel by train.

There was another momentary disruption in the smooth flow of events when it was discovered that athletes' passes had been secretly and illegally copied. There was a resultant crackdown on security at the Olympic Uniform Distribution and Accreditation Centre (UDAC). A check showed that there had been no unauthorised entry to Olympic venues, however.

An unprecedented total of 47 000 volunteers formed the 'G'day Brigade', as it became affectionately known. Most of the drivers and dispatchers, cleaners, accreditation and hosting staff were volunteers. While some performed technical tasks, others had to direct spectators to the toilets, or call out, hundreds of times in succession, such messages as, "Spectators going south, take the left side. Spectators going north, please go to the right."

Fifty-three per cent of the brightly clothed band were women; 24 per cent were in the 18–24 age group, and 22 per cent were 55 or older. Seventy-eight per cent came from New South Wales, the host state. Most were from Sydney, and many who came from the more distant suburbs travelled for as long as two hours to start their shifts. Some 1500 volunteers came from Western Australia, and 1200 from overseas. Some volunteered for the first time, but many had been involved with Games preparations for years. The overall attrition rate of two to three per cent was much lower than that of previous Games. All volunteers received training in Olympic history, venue orientation, and customer,

Day 3
Volume Two
Chapter Three



2
CHARLES BUTCHERS/OCOG

1. Volunteers dressed up as lifeguards direct the crowds through Sydney Olympic Park
2. Spectator Services volunteers meet for a briefing at the Olympic Stadium
3. The volunteer workforce reflected Sydney's ethnic and cultural diversity



3
ROGER SCOTT/OCOG

Day 3
Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day
3

cultural and disability service. Much of the orientation and training itself was provided by volunteers. Many took holiday leave to fulfil their responsibilities, and spent those weeks hard at work.

Volunteers signed up for various reasons. Many said they wanted to be part of a "once in a lifetime" event. Others wanted to "give back to the community" or "give a helping hand". One volunteer was inspired by the construction workers she saw working on a tunnel around the Opera House during a rainstorm. "I realised how hard they were working to make Sydney look good. I decided I wanted to do my bit."

Not surprisingly, most volunteers were passionate Olympic Games supporters, who saw the Sydney 2000 Games as hugely beneficial to Sydney and Australia as a whole. "We're taking our place with the rest of the world", "Sydney has never looked better" and "The gains to Sydney, the city I love, are tremendous", they declared.

Volunteers were not put off by the fact that their responsibilities often prevented them from attending events. Volunteering was 'doing the Games', and that was 'more than enough'.

Spectators, media and athletes alike were charmed by the enthusiasm of the volunteers. "Whenever I'm a little frazzled, it always seems that a volunteer comes up to give me a candy," said one journalist. Customer service in the Sydney 2000 Games was rated very highly – 80 per cent of respondents in a survey gave it a rating of 8 out of 10 to 10 out of 10.

High Art

Day 3 also offered high art – both literally and figuratively. *Tosca* was performed by Opera Australia, while the Pyrmont Live Site showcased performance art on 4 m high flexible



4
CLIVE BRUNSKILL/ALLSPORT

poles. Exhibitions on that day offered visitors photographs of Sydney and its multicultural nature, Aboriginal art, Australian colonial art, and a multi-discipline focus on Sydney Harbour, including art, architecture, design, literature, film and fantasy.

The crowds thronged to the city, and the Live Site at Martin Place was threatened with an early shutdown at 11 pm after alcohol problems made the area unsafe. Planned dance party entertainment was put on hold after a glass-smashing incident when some revellers lost control. The same night, a Romanian weightlifter expelled from the Games for doping went missing.

Sporting Firsts in Sydney

Once again the sporting events were offering new highs.

Italy's First Fencing Victory Since 1960

An exciting gold medal match between France and Italy in the men's team épée left the French competitor Hugues Obry spent, lying panting on the mat as if vanquished in a duel. At the conclusion of the match the score was tied at 38 points each. In the single minute of overtime Italy parried successfully.

First Medal of the Games for Lithuania

Daina Gudzineviciute beat France's Delphine Racinet by only a single point to win gold in women's trap shooting, the first medal of the Games for Lithuania.

A Record in Rifle Shooting

Cai Yalin of China won gold in the men's 10 m air rifle, and also set an Olympic record.

First Gold for China's Gymnasts

The first gold for China's gymnasts came in the men's team competition. The victorious team embraced at the podium; they had been unusually animated throughout the competition, clenching fists and punching the air at stirring moments.

First Gold for Penrith Venue

The new Penrith Whitewater Stadium hosted its very first gold medal win on 18 September. Tony Estanguet of France won gold in the men's canoe singles. Defending Olympic champion Michal Martikan of Slovakia won silver. History was made when most team leaders rejected the original layout for the kayak and canoe events. They claimed the course was unfair and too long, and as a result it was revamped. This was the first time an entire layout had ever been rejected.



5
MICHAEL RAYNER/OLYMPIC ARTS FESTIVAL

4. Joy and despair are divided by only one point as Italy beats France in the men's team épée 39-38
5. Parallel to the sporting competition, the Olympic Arts Festival offered a multitude of events for Olympic fans. In Prince Alfred Park, the Flying Fruit Fly Circus performs Fusion with the Shanghai Acrobatic Troupe



ERIC GALLARD/REUTERS

First in 36 Years

There was jubilation for Australia at its first judo medal in 36 years when Maria Pekli won bronze in a close match in the women's under 57 kg event. The tension was heightened when she appeared to injure her knee while competing, but she completed the event both unscathed and exultant.

Special Sporting Moments

Showdown for the Thorpedo

The Aquatic Centre was the scene of the long-awaited 200 m freestyle showdown between Sydney's hero Ian Thorpe, the Australian Thorpedo, and Pieter van den Hoogenband of the Netherlands. Though the home crowd collectively urged Thorpe to the edge of the pool, the record was van den Hoogenband's, with Thorpe finishing just a touch behind. Spectators watching the race on television at Holland Heineken House, the Sydney 2000 Headquarters for the Netherlands Olympic Team, jumped up and down, shaking the building. The celebration continued into the night.

Realising a Dream

World champion Lenny Krayzelburg from the USA added the 100 m backstroke title to his collection, establishing a new Olympic record in the process. Krayzelburg, born in Ukraine, began his sporting life under the Soviet system, and then emigrated with his parents to the USA. The family lived in poverty, making many sacrifices while their sporting star strove for success. He embodies the American dream: the promise that anyone with the will can participate – and win.

Dramatic Finishes

There were nailbiting moments for anxious spectators in the women's swimming events when Diana Mocanu of Romania won the 100 m backstroke, storming through the last few metres to a dramatic finish over Japan's Mai Nakamura and a new Olympic record. She became her country's first Olympic gold medalist in swimming. In the women's 100 m breaststroke, outsider 16-year-old Megan Quann of the USA took centre stage in the last 15 m. She overtook Penny Heyns of South Africa, winner of both the 100 m and 200 m in Atlanta, to capture gold. The Australian Leisel Jones was second, and Heyns took the bronze.

The Elation of Victory

Crowds will always remember Italian Giuseppe Maddaloni's visible delight at his gold medal judo under 73 kg win – he did a cartwheel, hugged his coach and kissed the mat in his elation.

Women's Weightlifting: Victory in the Balance

Women's weightlifting justified its inclusion in the Sydney Olympic Games with a display of high drama and world records. Favourite Ri Song Hui of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea appeared to have the gold medal in hand in the women's 58 kg class. Then all looked on breathless as she failed to make an attempt in her second lift of the clean and jerk within the allotted time. Soraya Jimenez Mendivil of Mexico took advantage of this opening to win gold with a clean and jerk lift of 127.5 kg. In the women's 53 kg class, Yang Xia of China set a new world record.

Medallists Win a Double Victory

Each of the three medal-winning cyclists at the velodrome on Day 3 had to transcend enormous physical challenges in order to participate in the 3000 m women's individual pursuit. Gold medallist Leontien Zijlaard of the Netherlands had overcome an eating disorder. Silver medallist Marion Clignet of France, also a former eating disorder victim, suffers from epilepsy and arthritis, and bronze medallist Yvonne McGregor of Great Britain had overcome a back problem that caused a loss of power in one leg. Their double victories demonstrated the courage of many Olympians who have to face great challenges in their lives to attain that moment of glory.

Meeting the Demands

As Day 3 ended and spectators returned to homes and hotels, athletes and officials to the Olympic Village, the Sydney 2000 Games was well under way. Upon the day-to-day busyness of this vast city had been superimposed the high demands of the Olympic Games – huge crowds, heavy traffic and high tension. It seemed an unlikely match. But the goodwill of the volunteers and the crowds and the city's own people kept the two elements interacting in a harmonious whole.



JERRY LAMPEN/REUTERS

Day 3

Volume Two
Chapter Three



MICHAEL STELLE/SPORT

6. While the women's 3000 m individual pursuit medals were awarded on Day 3, Felicia Ballanger of France prepares for her 200 m flying start qualifying heat at the Dunc Gray Velodrome. She won gold in this event on Day 5

7. Soraya Jimenez Mendivil of Mexico wins her country's first gold medal in weightlifting

8. The Ukrainian gymnastics team, silver medallists, watch in surprise as the Chinese celebrate their gold medal with an uncharacteristic display of emotion





DAY 4 – TUESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

At the Opening Ceremony, a vast crowd of actors, depicting the migrants who came to settle in Australia, moved together to form the shape of the Olympic rings.

These great circles, appearing as symbols throughout the Games, were symbols not only of the Olympic Movement, but also of the ideal for which it stands – the belief that sport can break down barriers of language, culture, nationality, age and sex, and build bridges between people all over the world as a means of promoting world peace. And the spirit of cooperation and friendliness in Sydney made the realisation of this ideal possible.

Olympic rings had been installed on Sydney's Harbour Bridge; another set was perched above the screen at the Martin Place Live Site. Both sets were illuminated throughout the Games. The Olympic symbol appeared on hundreds of signs and banners throughout the city, an eye-catching focus for the crowds, a reminder of the purpose of the festivities.

A Day of Peace

The first Games of the new Millennium demonstrated the far-reaching importance of the Olympic Games, a significance that transcends pure sport competition. Day 4 was the International Day of Peace. On this day in Sydney, the spotlight shone on the Olympic Movement's efforts towards world peace and support for the rights of athletes. The importance of this day, and the Olympic Movement's historical commitment to international understanding and peace, were conveyed to spectators and athletes alike in moving broadcasts from the video scoreboards at every venue. Further support came from a message of solidarity from United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

The Sydney 2000 Games were indeed the 'Peace Games', being the first Games since the international endorsement of the Olympic Truce. This is an initiative by the IOC, modelled on the truce or *ekecheiria* of ancient Greece, which the IOC has proclaimed in cooperation with the United Nations. First promulgated in 1992, the Olympic Truce calls upon all governments to cease any hostilities in which they are involved during the Olympic Games. On 24 November 1999, the 54th General Session of the United Nations General Assembly unanimously endorsed the Olympic Truce. The resolution was adopted and co-sponsored by 180 member states, and all five permanent members of the Security Council: China, France, the Russian Federation, Great Britain and the USA.

On Day 4 in Sydney, members of the Olympic Family were given the opportunity to examine the contribution of the Olympic Movement to peace. A day-long symposium at Sydney's University of New South Wales focused attention on

the contribution of the Olympic Games to world peace. It was titled 'Sport, the Culture of Peace, and the Observance of the Olympic Truce'. The symposium had been initiated by Fékrou Kidané, Director of the IOC Department of International Cooperation, and was presented in collaboration with the University's Centre for Olympic Studies.

In his remarks to the symposium, Mr Kidané gave examples of the efforts of the Olympic Movement to reduce world conflict and tension. He noted that the Sydney Olympic Games had provided the occasion for the two Koreas to march as one delegation in the Opening Ceremony, symbolising their desire for reconciliation. For most of the past half century these two nations had been on the brink of war, separated by the most heavily armed frontier in the world. The IOC had been seeking rapprochement between the Koreas through behind-the-scenes diplomacy since well before the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul.

The message of peace and equality travelled further than the symposium. Travellers at Macdonaldtown railway station in inner Sydney were stopped in their tracks by the huge painting opposite the platform. As big as a building, this image showed US runners Tommie Smith and John Carlos giving the black power salute on the victory podium at the Mexico City 1968 Olympic Games. Smith and Carlos' protest gave international recognition to black Americans' aspirations to racial justice, but it also led to their immediate expulsion from the Games.

It is possible that Smith and Carlos might not have been expelled for their protest if the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) had been in place at the time. Established by the IOC in 1984, the CAS's jurisdiction was initially limited to disputes between international organisations. But in 1996 a special division was established for the Olympic Games, and it functioned with great effectiveness at both the Atlanta and Nagano Games. It is a big step forward for athletes' rights in the international sporting arena.



3

ALEXANDER DEMIANCHUK/REUTERS

Day 4
Volume Two
Chapter Three

2
COURTESY OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT, UNSW

1. The Olympic rings on Sydney's Harbour Bridge were a symbol of the celebration and festive spirit embracing the city, seen by day and night across the Harbour
2. IOC member Anita Defrantz speaks at a forum held in celebration of the International Day of Peace
3. A cyclist rides through flags on a hill in Sydney Olympic Park, decorated with the Look of the Games. Several of these hills served as lookouts and points of curiosity for spectators needing a break from the bustling Olympic Boulevard

3

Day 4
Volume Two
Chapter Three



4. The Japanese baseball team celebrate a home run in their game against Australia

5. Angel Perez (left) is allowed to compete for the USA after a decision delivered by the Court of Arbitration for Sport on Day 4

6. Security was enforced by the NSW Police Service. More than 150 threats were made against Olympic venues and Live Sites, but the Games unfolded without incidences

Making Decisions

The Sydney 2000 Games bore the fruit of these developments. Twelve distinguished arbitrators from around the world, under the leadership of a president and co-president, were standing by throughout the Games to bring virtually instant resolution to disputes and appeals. The arbitrators took decisions within 24 hours after an appeal was made, and gave written grounds for those decisions within 72 hours. The CAS provided justice on an Olympian scale – no other system in the world gives results so fast. The IOC bore the costs.

On Day 4, the CAS delivered its fifth decision of the Sydney 2000 Games, restoring the right of an athlete to compete. Angel Perez, a Cuban-born naturalised USA citizen, had been entered in the kayak competition. The IOC had rejected his entry on the grounds that he had not been a US citizen for more than three years, and thus required the approval of the Cuban Olympic Committee to compete for the US. This approval had not been given. Perez argued in his own defence that as a defector from Cuba he was not a former Cuban citizen, but a stateless political refugee – and for this reason it would be inappropriate to ask Cuba for permission. The CAS agreed, and upheld his participation in the Games.

By the end of the Games, the Court had delivered decisions in 16 appeals, ten more than at the Atlanta Games.



Keeping the Peace

Ironically, on this special day, peace was momentarily disturbed in Sydney. Two escaped prisoners hijacked an official car carrying a medical officer, a volunteer driver and two other volunteers associated with the Korean team. The car's passengers and driver escaped unhurt, but the incident did demonstrate that Olympic security is a perennial issue. As a result, security was increased at the Silverwater Prison, which is within 2 km of the Olympic stadium. In general, however, people in Sydney spoke of feeling quite safe at night during the Games, with good-natured crowds standing about on the roads chatting and celebrating.

Planning for Games security had to cover two highly contrasting needs: to be well-prepared for any incident, small or large scale, that might suddenly arise, and for security to be as unobtrusive as possible. To ensure that the crowds remained carefree and safe, security had to be comprehensive – and invisible. The effort throughout the Games was to provide a security 'presence'; to give athletes, spectators and visitors the confidence that they were being protected, and to do so in a firm and non-confrontational way. The army was indeed there – divisions had been briefed to respond at a moment's notice if required – but it was invisible.

The police were also there in force, covering large areas and huge crowds. The security team in Sydney drew its members from a broad spectrum. Five thousand New South Wales police officers, almost 40 per cent of the state's entire force, were identifiable in their blue uniforms. The 3500 employees of private security firms wore yellow and black, and 2800 volunteers wore SOCOG gear. To mitigate against attrition, volunteers were recruited from groups that regularly donated their time, such as rural fire-fighting contingents, emergency services and lifesaving associations. The security team was supplemented by 5000 members of the Australian Defence Force, and the entire crew was headed by New South Wales Police Services Commissioner Peter Ryan to ensure unified communication and command. Security staff patrolled all the venues, the trains and buses, and staff offices. They also escorted celebrities around town, to ensure they were protected from the media and others.

Despite the untoward occurrence of Day 4, overall the transportation system coped flawlessly, with record numbers of spectators being carried to the Games on this day: 180 000 people travelled to Sydney Olympic Park, 17 500 to Horsley Park and 35 000 to the Sydney Football Stadium.



In the city, people were also travelling to the Live Sites and the cultural events – as usual a cosmopolitan mix. There was jazz, Afro, hip-hop, and modern Australian music on offer. Indigenous urban narrator and songwriter Archie Roach collaborated with the Bangarra Dance Theatre, Australia's premier Aboriginal dance company, in a fusion of indigenous art forms ancient and modern.

Sporting Firsts

Three in a Row

Australia won gold in the equestrian team three-day event, and the crowd erupted in celebration. Jubilation was heightened by the knowledge that this gold was the third in a row, and a first in the history of the event.

Cycling World Record

In a race that had the crowds on their feet, the world champion German team became the Olympic 4000 m men's cycling team pursuit champions. The team broke the four-minute barrier and established a new world record, beating Ukraine into second place. Ukraine had earlier smashed Italy's four-year-old record. Great Britain defeated France, the reigning Olympic champion, to take the bronze with its fastest race of the series. Excitement reigned supreme at the Dunc Gray Velodrome.

Recalling Former Glory

The Romanian women won the team artistic gymnastics title for the first time since the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984. Their fiercest rivals, the Russian Federation, made some uncharacteristic mistakes. The Romanians seemed to be playing it safer – with success.

New Olympic Swimming Record

Yana Klochkova of the Ukraine claimed her second gold medal and a new Olympic record with a victory in the women's 200 m individual medley, winning by nearly two seconds.

Magic Moments in Sport

Uniting a Nation

With the spotlight on the Day of Peace on Day 4, it was a fitting day for good relations between the athletes of the two Koreas. Korea swept the women's individual archery medals, with Yun Mi-Jin edging team-mate Kim Nam-Soon by one point to take the gold, her country's first at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Team-mate Kim Soo-Nyung, a triple gold medallist returning to Olympic competition after seven years in retirement, beat Choe Ok Sil of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the bronze. Kim and Choe hugged after their bronze contest, symbolising the warming relations between the peoples of the divided nation.

India's First Olympic Weightlifting Medal

A delighted Karnam Malleswari won bronze for India in the women's 69 kg weightlifting class.

A Second Fencing Gold Medal

The Russian Federation's women's fencing team clinched the épée final, defeating Switzerland. With only 11 seconds to go, Tatiana Logounova launched an attack and won for the Russian Federation.

Swimming up a Storm

Tom Malchow claimed the sixth title for the USA in the Olympic swimming pool, with a storming finish in the men's 200 m butterfly final. Malchow came through on the last length to win, gaining his third Olympic record in the event through heats, semifinals and final. He expressed the elation with the heartfelt words, "I don't think it can get any better."

Madam Butterfly Masters Freestyle

Australia's swimming power continued to show itself at the Aquatic Centre. Susie O'Neill, fondly known as Madam Butterfly, proved herself the master of more than one stroke by winning the gold in the women's 200 m freestyle final. She led from the halfway mark and headed off a fierce late challenge from Slovakia's Martina Moravcova to win. The crowd stood as one, screaming and shouting deafeningly at her moment of glory.

A Special Kind of Champion

Spectators at the Aquatic Centre were treated to an Olympic champion of a different sort when Eric Moussambani, a 22-year-old from Equatorial Guinea took to the pool for the 100 m freestyle, his first ever attempt at this distance. The only pool available for training in his country was only 20 m long. After two other athletes had been disqualified for false starts, he became the sole competitor in his heat – and completed the race. Though he showed signs of fatigue in the last 20 m, Moussambani made a valiant effort to struggle to the finish line. The audience responded with a standing ovation. The newly named Eric the Eel left the pool glowing with pride, thanking the crowd for getting him through the race. In many ways his swim exemplified the ideals so strongly advocated by the IOC at the Peace Symposium.



GERARDO JULIEN/AFP

Day 4

Volume Two
Chapter Three



ERIC GALLARD/REUTERS



SEAN GARNSWORTHY/ALLSPORT

7. German team pursuit cyclist Jens Lehmann kneels to kiss the track that proved to be golden for him. His team set a new world record on their way to Olympic gold

8. After his performance in the Olympic pool on Day 4, Eric Moussambani takes a break from swimming and takes a surfing lesson at Bondi beach

9. Australian fans continue to cheer for their athletes in all venues. At the Tennis Centre, Mark Philippoussis signs autographs after his victorious match against Sweden's Thomas Johansson



Day 5

DAY 5 – WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

The Tin Symphony of the Opening Ceremony had a careful and cohesive overall design. But within its composition of metal, colour and noise, a number of ingenious and individualistic small objects drew the eye.

Like the Tin Symphony, Day 5 of the Games showed evidence of an overall program to support individual effort. For some time before the Sydney 2000 Games, Australian sporting bodies had been formulating and carrying out programs to support individual athletes, and this planning now paid off with a victory in archery.

On Day 5 Simon Fairweather won five sudden-death matches in a brilliant display of skill to win Australia's first gold medal in archery. Three years earlier, Australia's Athlete Olympic Program (AOP) had hired one of the world's most accomplished coaches, Korean Ki-Sik Lee, to assist him. Lee completely rebuilt Fairweather's technique, and helped him psychologically.

Fairweather's training had been based at the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in Canberra, which had become a centre of excellence, providing athletes with outstanding coaches, facilities and scientific support while helping them to continue their education and acquire important life skills. Impressed by the quality of its programs, many foreign athletes trained at the AIS or one of its regional centres during the build up to the Sydney 2000 Games.

While Australia has always been 'sports mad', preparations for the Sydney 2000 Games stimulated new investments and program initiatives in the Olympic sports. The Games gave an enormous boost to the development of elite-level sports in the host country and the nearby region. For many Australian athletes, AIS programs and financial support had much to do with their startling successes at the Games.

The success of other programs supporting Australian athletes was also evident. The Fosters Sports Foundation was formed in 1997 to support the Olympic dream of athletes who had no funding of their own. In total, 338 athletes were sponsored, and 185 won selection at the Games. Many were medal winners.

Of course, the buoyant support of the enthusiastic home crowd also helped Australia to win more medals at the Sydney Olympic Games than at any earlier Games. Australian supporters of all ages were wearing their hearts on their sleeves, and tattoos of the Australian flag or the boxing kangaroo on their arms, legs, ankles, shoulders and faces. Patriotism had never been so highly visible. And it was audible too, as many shouted themselves hoarse for their favourites. After his medal ceremony, Fairweather gave the vociferous, patriotic home crowd 50 per cent of the credit for his win. The refrain "Aussie! Aussie! Aussie! Oi! Oi! Oi!"

resounded through the stands, becoming one of the popular hallmarks of the Games. This chant, originally heard at the Sydney Cricket Ground, is of obscure origins, but it certainly reaffirmed its popularity at the Sydney 2000 Games.

Day 5 also highlighted the success of the overall planning program for Olympic venues in Sydney, with the various venues proving how well suited they were to the particular nature of the sports they were showcasing and to promoting those sports.

For sports in which Australians had had little experience, the Olympic Games aimed to be the start – to encourage longer term enthusiasm for particular sports, and for sport in general. For example, the belief was that bringing people to the purpose-built Penrith Whitewater Stadium for international competition would encourage them to use the facility after the Games, allowing them to learn the risky sport in a regulated facility rather than in a wild, unpredictable river.

The Whitewater Stadium at Penrith Lakes, the only one of its kind in the world, was highly praised by athletes and spectators alike for enabling the best to be derived from the sport. The horseshoe design enabled the sellout crowds in the packed stands and on the banks of the course to learn about the sport at its best, while athletes and coaches could follow every step of the race from the infield.

During the men's C2 competitions on Day 5, the entire Slovakian team ran alongside the Hochschorner twins, Pavol and Peter, cheering and flag-waving all the way as the two powered their way through the rushing waves and rapids. When the Scoreboard showed that the twins had won, three team-mates dived jubilantly into the docking bay, hugging and kissing them. It was Slovakia's first gold medal of the Games.



3

ANDY ZANELI/FARFAX

Day 5

Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day 5



2

AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION

1. The home crowd at the Sydney Games proved to be colourful and creative in their decor and vocal in their support
2. A javelin thrower is tested in the Biomechanics Dome. The Australian Institute for Sport trains elite athletes in preparation for international sporting events
3. Coach Ki-Sik Lee and Simon Fairweather are pleased with their gold medal performance in the archery finals. Fairweather also trains at the Australian Institute for Sport

4



LEID JACOBSONHALLSPORT

Olympic Firsts

Double Swimming Gold

Day 5 was indeed a day for the emergence of new champions. In swimming, Domenico Fioravanti of Italy won the 200 m breaststroke, becoming the first male in Olympic history to win both the 100 m and 200 m events in that stroke at a single Games. South African champion Terence Parkin took the silver with a new national record.

Gold for Colombia

In weightlifting, Maria Isabel Urrutia of Colombia gave her country its first ever gold medal by winning the women's title in the 75 kg division. Here the crowd learnt of an interesting technicality. According to Olympic rules, when competitors lift the same weight, the lightest one wins. Urrutia, Nigerian Ruth Ogbeifo and Kuo Yi-Hang of Chinese Taipei all raised the same total weight, but Urrutia, the lightest of the three, won on body-weight.

New Champion at the Velodrome

In cycling, Marty Nothstein of the USA upset two-time Olympic champion Jens Fiedler of Germany and three-time world champion Florian Rousseau of France in successive races to take the men's track sprint. Rousseau took the silver and Fiedler the bronze.

Fencing Thriller

In a battle of left-handers, Kim Young-Ho became the first ever Korean gold medallist in fencing in the men's individual foil, beating two champions in the process. European champion Ralf Bissdorf from Germany was awarded the silver, while former world champion Dmitri Chevtchenko of the Russian Federation won bronze. It was the second fencing medal of the week for Korea. Police had to keep eager fans from rushing the fencers as the audience gasped through every call. The final ended with scores a single point apart.

Third Time in Cycling

But not all defending Olympic champions were vanquished on this day. As with all other Olympic Games, the sheer unpredictability of the results delighted spectators at the Sydney 2000 Games. France's Felicia Ballanger, victor of the cycling sprint in Atlanta, in Sydney overcame a stiff challenge by the Russian Federation's Oxana Grichina to retain her title, and the gold medal.

Seven Golds for a Swimmer

At the Aquatic Centre, Jenny Thompson anchored the USA to victory in the women's 4 x 200 m freestyle relay. This gave her the seventh gold medal of her career, the highest total for any female swimmer at the Olympic Games.

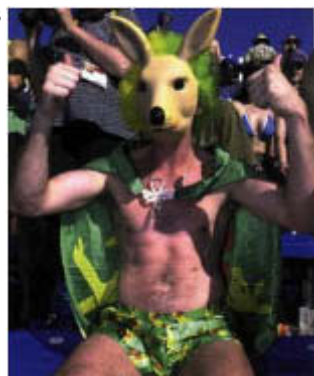
From Bronze to Gold

Renata Mauer-Rozanska of Poland shot from bronze at Atlanta to gold at Sydney in the women's three-position 50 m rifle event.

Triumph Over Injury

In artistic gymnastics, Alexei Nemov of the Russian Federation fought off the pain from a chronic shoulder injury to win the men's all-around competition, in a thrilling event-by-event duel with China's Yang Wei.

5



NEWSPIX

Small Nations Shine

Other smaller nations also shone on Day 5. The Netherlands's Pieter van den Hoogenband had already proved himself a giant-killer in the pool when he upset Australian hero Ian Thorpe in the 200 m freestyle on Day 3. On Day 5, he dethroned two-time Russian Federation gold medallist Alexander Popov in the 100 m freestyle, after setting a new world record in the semifinals. Not to be outdone, compatriot Inge de Bruijn established a new world record in the semifinals of the women's 100 m freestyle. She would go on to win three golds and one silver medal during the course of the competition. In judo, Mark Huizinga of the Netherlands took the 90 kg gold medal in a convincing ippon victory over Brazil's Carlos Honorato. In perhaps the most remarkable accomplishment of the day, the Dutch baseball team upset mighty Cuba in the preliminaries, winning 4-2. In 21 matches at three previous Olympic Games, Cuba had not lost once.

6



ANTHONY JOHNSON/FAIRFAX

4. Much attention was paid to the record-breaking Dutch swimmers, while their baseball team's victory over giant Cuba went almost unnoticed

5. Bondi's Beach Volleyball Centre was the stage for all things outrageous. Exuberant fans celebrated the Olympic competition

6. With Australia's hopes on his shoulders, Russell Mark won the silver medal in the men's double trap event. His daughter Holly is the first one to enjoy the medal

3

A horse also overcame injury to shine. US equestrian eventer David Connor had feared that his horse Custom Made would not recover from a freak leg injury in time for the Sydney 2000 Games. But Custom Made made Games history, winning for himself and his rider the best score ever awarded for the dressage component of the individual three-day event at an Olympic Games.

Doping, Drugs and Other Drama

Day 5 was not only eventful in the area of sport.

On this day, another weightlifter was found guilty of doping. A Bulgarian weightlifter tested positive to the illegal diuretic furosemide, which is a masking agent used to disguise the presence of other performance-enhancing drugs. He was forced to return his silver medal, and expelled from the Games. In a special ceremony in the Olympic Village, IOC Vice-President Richard Pound awarded the medal to third-place finisher Wu Wenxiang of China, and the bronze to fourth-placed Zhang Xiangxiang, also of China. It was the first time that athletes who received a higher placing as a result of cheating being detected were awarded their medals in a formal ceremony. The idea had long been proposed by athletes' rights advocates, to ensure that all who fairly won a medal received their moment of public recognition.

Belarus hammer thrower Vadim Devyatovsky was also banned from the Games, after testing positive to the steroid nandrolone in a pre-Games test.

Canadian equestrian Eric Lamaze had been refused entry to the Games by his country's NOC after he tested positive to cocaine. An arbitrator had recommended earlier that Lamaze be given another chance, on the grounds that he took the drug only to deal with extreme stress. But the Canadian Olympic Association, meeting on an emergency basis in Sydney on Day 5 rejected this explanation, noting that Lamaze had tested positive to cocaine once before.

Rumours continued to swirl about other cases of doping. In the Olympic Village, a cleaner was cut by a discarded needle,



7

Day 5
Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day
5

and several others had been found. Athletes use syringes to inject B₁₂ vitamins, but fears were raised that some could be injecting themselves with illegal substances as well. Officials immediately installed 700 syringe bins in the Olympic Village, while observing that some of the teams were "fairly well set up for this type of thing themselves already".

Others expressed complete confidence in the deterrent effect of the testing being carried out at the Games. Said new swimming star Pieter van den Hoogenband, "It's impossible to take drugs and not get caught at these Games."

President Samaranch returned to Sydney late on Day 5, accompanied by his daughter Maria Teresa, to resume his responsibilities at the Games. He returned to a city buzzing with excitement, a city where the gigantic and intricate machinery of the Olympic Games was now well and truly in place, and heightened emotion and heart-stopping moments were the order of the day.

By the close of Day 5, athletes from the host nation had won 22 medals, an unprecedentedly high total for Australia, and just one less than the USA. This achievement attested to the talents and efforts of the individual participants and also the support of the spectators. It also reflected the unity of endeavour in Australia before the Olympic Games, the joint attempt to seek new solutions to sporting issues.



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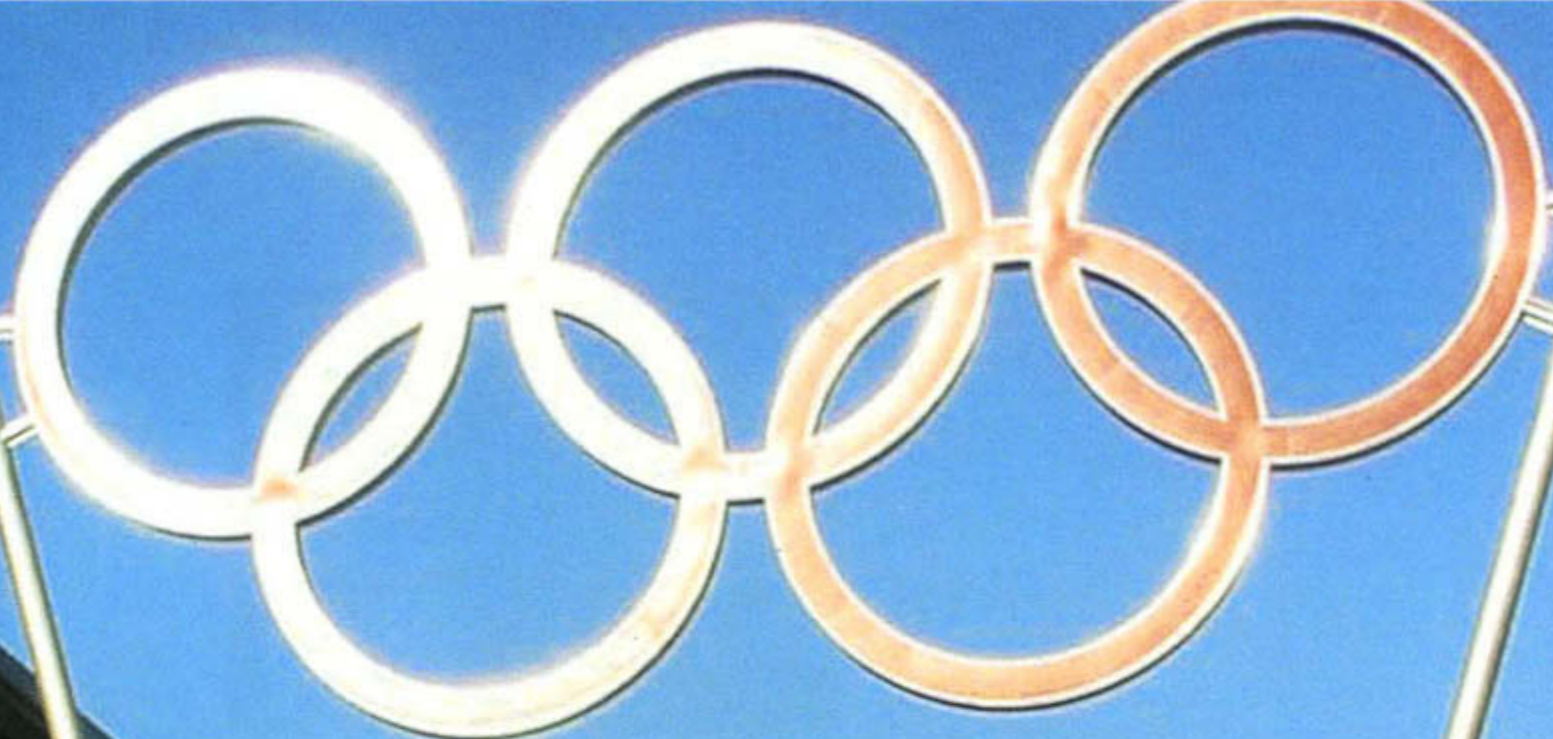
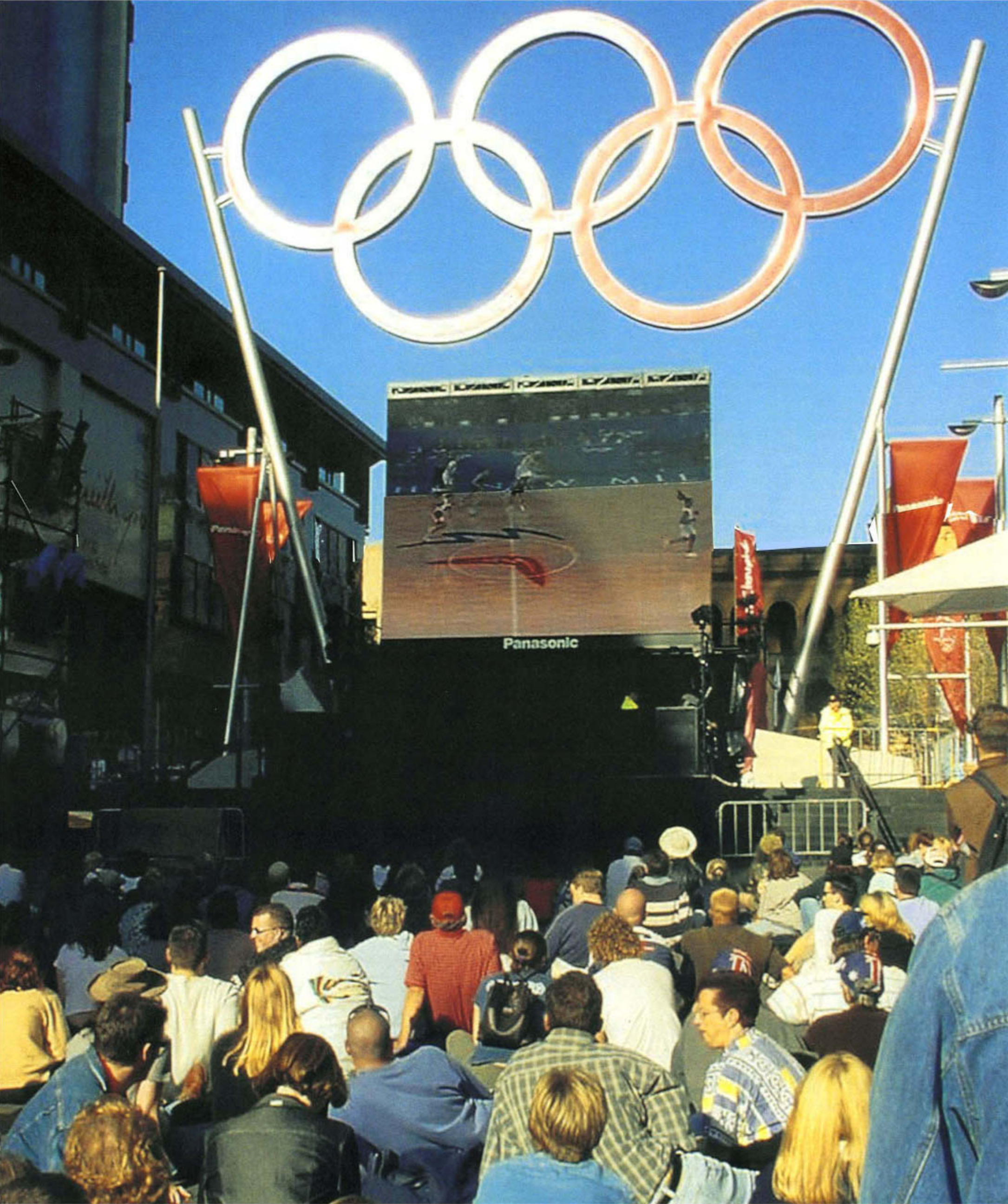
KIM JAE-HWAN/AP



9

BRENNAN LINSLEY/AP PHOTO

7. David O'Connor and Custom Made of the USA celebrate their gold medal
8. The day's results at the judo were reason to celebrate for Brazil: Carlos Honorato and Tiago Camilo won silver medals in the 91 kg and 73 kg event
9. Backed by a passing ferry, second ranked Alessandra Sensini of Italy rides her sailboard toward the finish line. Sensini won this race and would take the gold medal in the women's Mistral four days later



Panasonic





DAY 6 – THURSDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

Encircling the arena at the Opening Ceremony was a crowd of 110 000, people of all ages from a medley of nations and backgrounds. They responded in unison to the spectacle before them. This pleasure would re-form itself again and again during the Games as people made new friendships, linked by their common delight in the huge spectacle that was the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

The Sydney 2000 Games was marked by the efforts of the organisers to bring people together to build and extend circles of friendship. Day 6 showed evidence of growing amity between people.

Despite the air of cheerfulness and friendship, Day 6 did not run without snags. Areas around Horsley Park, the equestrian venue, were again the scene of a major traffic snarl. The combination of an oil spill, morning fog and light rain made for difficult conditions, and conspired to delay equestrian events for the day.

There were delays elsewhere as well. On this day, as on other days of the Games, long, patient queues were to be seen at the ticket offices as people lined up to buy tickets for events or collect previously ordered tickets. The crowds, pleasant and positive at venues and on public transport, were equally amicable during what could have been a highly frustrating activity. Picking up tickets became just another event to be placed on the schedule of Games-related activities – watching the torch relay, seeing the Opening Ceremony live or with friends around a television set, visiting the Live Sites in the city to see matches on a big screen or simply to be part of the scene, visiting beaches and parks to be out and about in this most festive of times, and meeting and entertaining visitors from overseas or other Australian states.

The pleasant atmosphere in the ticket queues was a sign that some of the past tension about tickets had been resolved. A year before the Games, Australians had been indignant when it was revealed that many of the best tickets had been reserved for corporate sponsors and other VIPs. They were further upset when those ordering tickets were required to pay in advance, even though they could not be guaranteed their first choices. A special program to ensure that schoolchildren and community and welfare groups were given priority in the allocation of low-priced tickets did little to assuage ill-feeling.

Such was the demand to see the events at these Games, however, that new records for sales were set every day. By the end of Day 5, 5.75 million tickets, or 84.5 per cent of the capacity for all events and 88 per cent of the Sydney events, were sold. Earlier in the week, Sydney City Council had won plaudits for initiating a crackdown on scalpers, seizing several thousand tickets and, with the support of the Federal

Government, deporting two Italian scalpers. Scalpers were everywhere at the Sydney 2000 Games, even hovering around the ticket-selling offices in the city centre. They were defiant, claiming they were providing a service. By the end of the Games, 11 scalpers from five countries had been deported.

It was disclosed that NOCs from the Russian Federation, Spain, Switzerland, the USA and Venezuela were selling tickets to scalpers. This practice is not new. It has long been employed by NOCs from developing countries to offset their costs. But in the Olympic spirit of affording access to the widest possible number, the expectation has always been that such tickets would be sold at face value. The revelation of 'price gouging' immediately tore open an old wound, touching off damning headlines and editorials in the national press.

Negative views were tempered by other, more positive aspects of Games organisation, particularly the emphasis by organisers on celebrating family and friendship ties. The Sydney 2000 Games had a special mission: to make it possible for the families of competitors to join them at the Games. A carefully planned program enabled this to happen; it also ensured that many lasting friendships would be made that would transcend national and cultural barriers.

The city's cultural diversity made it a natural meeting place for the cosmopolitan audience brought together by the Olympic Games. At the time of the Sydney 2000 Games, people from over 170 countries were living in Sydney, speaking over 70 languages. Forty per cent of the population were either migrants themselves, or the children of migrants.



3

Day 6
Volume Two
Chapter Three



2

GRANT TURNER/THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

1. The Live Site at Martin Place was busy throughout the day and spectators often lingered until late at night

2. Though organisers and the City Council tried to crack down on scalpers, demand was such that tickets were changing hands everywhere

3. A Norwegian fan tries to get tickets to see her handball team play

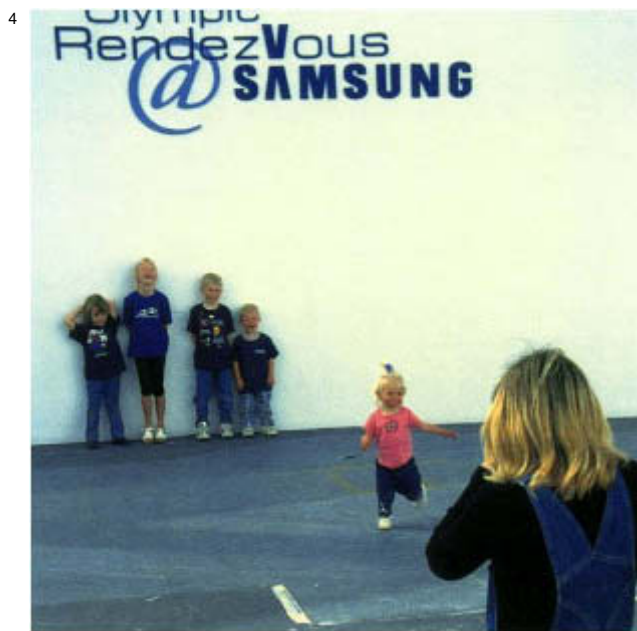
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Day 6
Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day
6



ROGER SCOTT/SOCOG



CHARLES BUTCHERS/SOCOG

4. Kids play outside the Samsung Olympic Rendezvous, part of the Athletes Family Host Program

5. A host family waits to meet their guest at the Reception Centre at the Australian Technology Park

6. British rower Steven Redgrave (second from left) practises with his team as the sun rises over Penrith Lakes

The Samsung Athletes Family Host Program was established by SOCOG in recognition of the fact that family members and partners are indispensable to the well-being of most Olympic athletes. To address the expense of travelling abroad, the program helped find hosts for two family members of foreign athletes, who would have the opportunity to stay up to eight days with local Sydney families.

About 1500 families from overseas applied. All were accepted. At the same time host families also applied, and were screened in interviews. Each prospective home was assessed, an important criterion being proximity to the appropriate Olympic venue. Where possible, families were matched on the basis of age, religion and culture, diet or preferred cuisine. Family guests were responsible for their own travel expenses and tickets for the Games, but hosts provided accommodation and breakfast.

Host families had a range of reasons for offering their hospitality. One family became involved because they wanted to do something that had "nothing to do with the politics of money". They took in a mother and father from the USA who were thus enabled, despite financial difficulties, to see their

son and brother competing in sailing in his first Olympic Games. Another host sought a family because she had travelled extensively in Latin America, where, "People opened their hearts and homes to me, even though they had very little. I wanted to return the generosity."

The program was warmly received by the athletes involved. "I couldn't wait until my wife and daughter arrived in Sydney," US hammer thrower Lance Deal said. "It's a terrific contribution to my peace of mind. Now I can concentrate upon my event." The host family for the Deals had responded to a call from their local church.

The welcome mat was laid out all over Sydney. Overseas visitors found their needs had been considered in almost every possible situation. At crossings, the roads were marked 'Look Right' to cater for the many visitors who came from countries where driving is done on the right side of the road, and not on the left as in Australia. The Live Sites highlighted the city's welcome to overseas visitors, and showcased its multicultural nature with an eclectic and diverse offer of entertainment, performed at lunchtimes and in the late evening.

There was provision for including overseas groups in many celebrations. Several clubs and bars became gathering places for athletes and visitors from different nations. Some even changed their names: the Pontoon Bar was renamed Moose Lodge to become host to the Canadians. There were also gathering places for the Gaelic, the Germans, the Americans, the French, the Italians, the Dutch and the South Africans.

New ties were being formed as the city took in its new visitors and began to view their actions with pride. The Netherlands' gold medal swimmer Inge de Bruijn was by now a darling of the Australian press. 'Inky', as they referred to her, won her second gold medal on Day 6, in the 100 m freestyle event. She stormed down the return length to win by a commanding 0.50 seconds. De Bruijn acknowledged the friendliness of the home crowd. "It's great to be appreciated here and not just in the Netherlands."

More Magic Moments in Sport

A Complete Set of Medals

Italy's Massimiliano Rosolino won Olympic gold, with victory in the men's 200 m individual medley. This gave him a complete set of medals from the Sydney 2000 Games.

Perfect Timing

The finish of the women's 200 m breaststroke enthralled spectators with its drama. World champion Agnes Kovacs of Hungary, swimming in fifth position at the 100 m mark, timed her race to perfection. She overtook her rivals one by one, passing leader Kristy Kowal of the USA in the final strokes to a tumult of applause.

A Golden Double

Two members of the US team raced a body-length apart for the 200 m backstroke gold medal, but Lenny Krayzelburg, already victorious in the 100 m backstroke, won his second gold ahead of team-mate Aaron Peirsol.



ANDY CLARK/REUTERS



JANIE SCOURIE/ALLSPORT

Shades of Montreal

Andreea Raducan led a Romanian sweep of the medals in the women's gymnastics all-around competition. She had been the most consistent competitor, but was disqualified for doping and another Romanian, Simona Amanar, received the gold medal instead. Spectators expressed their regret as Russian Federation favourite Svetlana Khorkina fell off the bars and stumbled after the vault. Controversy and confusion marked this competition. The International Gymnastics Federation gave the 18 gymnasts from the first two rotations the opportunity to redo their vaults after it was discovered the apparatus had been set 5 cm too low. In the end, only five gymnasts accepted the offer, and none of them was placed in the final standings.

Top Seeds Go Down

China won the mixed doubles gold medal in badminton after Zhang Jun and Gao Ling pulled off a three-game comeback victory over top seeds Tri Kusharyanto and Minarti Timur of Indonesia. They lost 15–1 in the first set, but an hour later were running a victory lap draped in the Chinese flag.

Judges Decide on Victory

In the women's judo under 78 kg category, tension reigned after the standard four minutes: scores were equal for outsider Tang Lin of China and red-hot favourite Celine Lebrun of France. Tang Lin won – by a judge's decision. Lebrun was penalised for her non-attacking conduct, and French spectators appeared as devastated as she was.

Vengeance Four Years Later

In fencing, Italian policewoman Valentina Vezzali avenged her Atlanta defeat, defeating Germany's Rita Koenig to win gold in the women's individual foil.

Empty-handed Hungary

Mihai Claudiu Covaliu of Romania was the surprise winner of the individual sabre, defeating Mathieu Gourdain of France 15–12. Neither finalist was expected to be in the medal round. Wiradech Kothny of Germany won the bronze by defeating Domonkos Ferjancsik of Hungary, leaving Hungary empty-handed in an event it had dominated for decades.

Unsolved Mystery

This was the day that runner Cathy Freeman's greatest rival, Marie-Jose Perec, left Sydney – before competing against Freeman in the 400 m run. She left behind a confusing impression of her dissatisfaction and negative state of mind since her arrival in Sydney for the Games. The reason for her decision to leave remains a mystery.

Olympic Firsts

First Gold in 16 Years for Australia

Brett Aitken and Scott McGrory won Australia's first gold medal in track cycling in 16 years, in the madison, a 60 km race of 240 laps. In this race, teams have to accumulate the most points in sprints, which occur every 20 laps. Both cyclists emotionally attributed their success to the inspiration of their small children. McGrory's son Alexander had recently died after a premature birth.

A New Event

French cyclist Florian Rousseau won cycling gold in the keirin, a new Olympic event that originated in Japan. Riders compete in a sprint after completing a number of laps behind a pacer. The pacer starts at 25 km/h, increases to 45 km/h and leaves the track with two and a half laps to go.

Indonesia Means Badminton

Amid scenes of jubilation, Indonesians Tony Gunawan and Candra Wijaya beat Lee Dong-Soo and Yoo Yong-Sung of Korea to win the Olympic badminton men's doubles gold medal. The top seeds won after a battle lasting one hour and 17 minutes. The victory brought Indonesia's all-time gold tally to four – all in badminton.

Record in Shooting

Azerbaijan's women's skeet shooter Zemfira Meftakhetdinova won gold after qualifying three points clear of the field, and then shooting a perfect 25-target finals round for a total score of 98, a new Olympic record.

Not all of the sporting events ran smoothly. It had been a troublesome day at Horsley Park. Of 38 horse and rider combinations, 13 fell or were injured. But as Day 6 ended the cheerful mood continued. Friendships continued to grow in this hospitable city as thousands celebrated in harmony.



SHAUN BOTTRELL/ALLSPORT

Day 6

Volume Two
Chapter Three



STEVE SYCZCITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES

7. Svetlana Khorkina, a favourite for the Sydney Games, stumbles after her vault in the all-around competition. It was later discovered that the vault was 5 cm too low

8. In the countdown to the women's 400 m track final, Marie-Jose Perec's sudden departure leaves papers speculating about her reasons

9. Florian Rousseau of France receives a kiss after his gold medal win in the keirin



SUN
NG

Tennis Centre South Gate Olympic Expo Hockey Centre

↑
SOUTH GATE
TENNIS CENTRE
OLYMPIC EXPO
HOCKEY CENTRE



DAY 7 – FRIDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

Gigantic loops and circles were interwoven in meticulous formation at the Opening Ceremony as the 2000-member Sydney 2000 Olympic Band marched and played.

And the Games, too, required meticulous organisation so that spectators, athletes and officials could move safely in huge numbers in crowded areas. Day 7, Friday 22 September, was rightly called Super Friday, because on this day more than 500 000 people had to be moved in and out of Sydney Olympic Park. With the start of athletics and the penultimate day's competition in swimming, spectators and people commuting to work combined to create an estimated 1.9 million passenger movements, more than double the usual weekday load. It would be the greatest mobilisation of people on a single day in Australian history.

Sydney met the challenge with flying colours. Although there were often lineups for trains, most passengers felt that the system was working exactly as it should. It helped that the Olympic Roads and Transport Authority had put advertisements in every form of media to encourage Olympic ticket holders to plan their travel carefully and to start out early. It also helped that pedestrian routes at several stations and Sydney Olympic Park had been redesigned so that the crowds could be spread out, and that volunteers gave directions and encouragement throughout the day. Some scrambled up nine metre towers, like lookouts strapped to the masts in the age of sail, to assist the marshals on the ground. The weather contributed as well. Despite a forecast of possible rain, it was another sunny day, putting everyone in party mood once more.

Super Friday demonstrated the genius behind the broad 1.7 km boulevard that architect George Hargreaves had designed for Sydney Olympic Park. It was alive with people on Day 7.

Super Friday taxed the capacity of the Sydney transportation system to the full, and the Games facilities and open plazas, tested logistics and communication systems, and demanded highly trained professional and volunteer staff. For many observers it revived discussion of the perennial issue of 'giganticism'. The constant rise in the number of Olympic sports, events and participants is testament to the Olympic Movement's success in stimulating participation in physical activity around the world. To the extent that most of this growth has occurred amongst women, it has been an enormous contribution to the realisation of gender equity.

The growth in the popularity of the Games amongst spectators and tourists, as evidenced by the record ticket sales in Sydney, is another performance measure of which the Olympic Movement can be justly proud. But with the growth in numbers, the increasing professionalisation of training and competition amongst many athletes, and the

increased sophistication of spectators, come new demands upon the host organisers. Some fear that these pressures have put hosting the Games beyond the capacity of all but the largest cities in the world's most advanced economies.

The record numbers of participants and spectators did little to discourage others from visiting Sydney for the Games, however. The city's Kingsford Smith Airport continued to process an average of 30 000 arrivals every day; on Day 7, 5000 of them flying in from Melbourne, Australia's first Olympic city.

Visitors used various forms of accommodation. The majority stayed with family or friends. Others stayed in hotels or motels, and some in rented units or hostels. A novel accommodation solution, one that allayed fears of an insufficient number of hotel beds during the Games, and made use of extra space, was provided by the nine 'floating hotels' that sailed into Sydney for the Games, accommodating thousands of visitors. They also offered wonderful views, focusing visitors' attention on the beauty of the Harbour.

The use of central city facilities was deliberate, part of the planning device of using the city centre as the place where overseas visitors and the Australians could meet and interact during the Games. The Live Sites were intended to encourage visitors to use the central city rather than overcrowd the sporting venues, particularly when tickets for a particular event had been sold out. The Sites were also intended as the central focus of public celebration of the Games and as information centres. Visitors made good use of the Games INFO booths at the Sites; that at Martin Place was particularly busy.

The Live Sites were an integral part of Olympic Live, a program of public events aimed at making Sydney's city centre come alive during the Games, day and night. Each Site had its own entertainment theme: 'Centre Stage' for the Domain, 'Circus' for Circular Quay, 'Club' for Martin Place stand-up comedy and cabaret, 'J Gigs' jazz and youth concerts for Central,

Day 7
Volume Two
Chapter Three



1. Spectators crowd Olympic Boulevard on Super Friday, which marked Sydney Olympic Park's peak visitor numbers and the toughest test of the transport system
2. Transport in the Olympic City worked without a hitch and travellers were safely delivered to the Olympic action
3. With most major hotels booked out, so-called floating hotels were used to double as luxury accommodation, hosting 30 000 visitors on nine ships



4



NIC ELLIS/THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

'World Music' for Tumbalong Park at Darling Harbour, and 'Performance Art' at Pyrmont Bay Park. Amateur groups were also given the opportunity to entertain. At the western end of Circular Quay, local dance and choral groups, some of them with very young members, performed throughout the day on a small stage. A free bus service transported visitors to the Live Sites.

As the sky darkened on Day 7, pop, funk and classical/rock were all playing at Martin Place, and popular Aboriginal group Yothu Yindi was on at Darling Harbour. People partied under the Olympic rings at Martin Place. Huge crowds gathered, as on all other days, to watch comedians 'Rampaging' Roy Slaven and HG Nelson with their satirical TV talkshow *The Dream*, which poked fun at the day's Olympic events and developed a cult following. Celebrities like tennis great Billie Jean King were keen to appear on the show, which became an integral part of each day's events for its wide audience.

The atmosphere at the Live Sites was electric. Watching Games events together on a huge screen, reacting with fervour to high and low moments alike, spectators felt as if they were right there in the stands at the sports stadiums.

US athlete Michael Jordan described Sydney as 'the Party Games', and with the festive atmosphere in the city, the high

spirits, and the gathering of groups at Live Sites and at clubs, it did seem that everyone was attending the great big party that was the Sydney 2000 Games.

One group of visitors was not welcome, however. Hundreds of thousands of furry brown Bogong moths invaded the Olympic Stadium on Day 7, flocking around the lights and flying in the faces of athletes as they competed. Entomologists explained that they had been drawn to Sydney by the unusually warm weather and the lights of the Olympic city. While these moths are not harmful, their numbers gave them nuisance value and many runners found them difficult to cope with.

IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch made an unscheduled visit to the New South Wales Tennis Centre at Sydney Olympic Park to meet 200 volunteers and thank them for their dedication to the Games. After the informal ceremony, President Samaranch strolled back to the stadium through the Olympic Boulevard. He was clapped and cheered and kissed on the cheek.

Firsts for the Sydney 2000 Games

First Gold Ever

The first Olympic gold medal ever awarded in trampoline gymnastics went to Irina Karavaeva of the Russian Federation, as the event made its debut before an enthusiastic audience.

The First Athletics Gold Medal

Poland's Robert Korzeniowski took the first athletics gold medal of the Games in the men's 20 km walk.

Finns Finish First in Field Competition

The first field competition of the Games saw the end of an 80-year drought for Finland when Arsi Harju won the shot put.

First in Fencing

Jean-Noel Ferrari led the French fencing team to victory in the men's team foil final, giving France its first gold medal in this event in 20 years. There was great excitement when China took silver, its second medal ever in this sport.

5



GRANAME EDWARDS CITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES

4. Even before the sun is up, staff and eager spectators line up for a cup of coffee at Sydney Olympic Park

5. The Olympic fever can be felt throughout the city, as crowds move from venues to Live Sites and Sydney's sights

6. Party goers enjoy the buzz and the occasional sighting of an Olympic athlete in Sussex Lane, an outdoor nightclub set up in a disused laneway specifically for the Games



EVA RODRIGUEZ-RESTRICTED CITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES



CHARLES KRUPA/AP PHOTO

Olympic Record

The women's 800 m freestyle was won by a swimmer already crowned with victory in Sydney. Brooke Bennett of the USA won gold with a new Olympic record, and Yana Klochkova of Ukraine took silver.

Magic Sporting Moments

Back Again and in Contention

It was a victory for the veteran. After two years of inactivity, French veteran David Douillet came back to retain his 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games crown, defeating favourite and dual world champion Shinichi Shinohara of Japan in the men's over 100 kg judo. A father of three, Douillet had retired in 1997 after his fourth world title, only to come out of retirement to try again in Sydney.

Three Out of Four

Korea won three of the four archery gold medals in Sydney, including the women's individual and team events.

Third in a Row

For the third consecutive time, China won gold in women's doubles table tennis, with top seeds Wang Nan and Li Ju defeating compatriots Sun Jin and Yang Ying. The finalists delighted the capacity crowd with their high-quality play.

Swimming Excitement

The swimming competition continued to be superb. Sixteen-year-old Romanian Diana Mocanu, the youngest swimmer in the final, completed a golden double with victory in the women's 200 m backstroke.

Sweden's First Medal in the Pool

European champion Lars Froelander won gold in the men's 100 m butterfly, giving Sweden its first medal in the pool. The home crowd was somewhat shocked to see Michael Klim and Geoff Huegill relegated to silver and bronze positions by Froelander's power-finish.

Hopes Dashed

The men's 50 m freestyle was a high-stakes event. Pieter van den Hoogenband was trying to become the first swimmer ever to win the 50 m, 100 m and 200 m at one Games, while rival Alexander Popov was trying for his third straight gold medal in the 50 m. But their hopes were dashed when the race was won by Americans Gary Hall Jr and Anthony Ervin who dead-heated, with van den Hoogenband finishing third and Popov sixth.

Drugs: A Low Note

On a lower note, two more Bulgarian weightlifters lost their medals, a gold and a bronze, after testing positive for illegal diuretics. The International Weightlifting Federation suspended the entire Bulgarian team from the Games, and the IOC redistributed the medals in new ceremonies in the Olympic Village. Tara Nott of the USA now received the gold medal in the women's 48 kg division, Raema Lisa Rumbewas of Indonesia the silver, and fourth-placed Sri Indriyani, also of Indonesia, received the bronze. In the men's 62 kg division, bronze was now awarded to Gennady Oleshchuk of Belarus.

At the End of the Day

As Day 7 ended the first week of competition had come to an end too, with the media praising the organisation of the Games, the city, the weather, the volunteers and, of course, the sport. With the organisation of crowds, facilities and festivities so meticulously planned, it seemed certain that the second week would be just as successful.

Day 7

Volume Two
Chapter Three



VINCENTO PINTO/REUTERS



9

7. Referees at the boxing are proud to pose with boxing legend Evander Holyfield, who came to see the bout between Jeff Lacy of the USA and Pawel Kakietek of Poland

8. Tears of joy: Jean-Noel Ferrari of France is comforted by team manager Christian Martin after their team beat China for the gold medal in the men's team foil final

9. The boxing competition continued with round two bouts in the 60 kg class. Romania's George Lungu is fanned by a corner man during his lightweight match against Cristian Bejarano Benitez of Mexico, who went on to win the bronze medal





DAY 8 – SATURDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

At the Opening Ceremony, women dancers wove their way through the show, linking its segments. Women acted as guides, discoverers and torchbearers.

Recognition of women athletes has come a long way since the Athens Games in 1896, when the 280 athletes participating were all male.

Although women have been competing in the Games since 1900, prior to 1928 it was only because of the initiatives of local organisers and sympathetic IFs, like Fédération Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA), that there were events for women at all. In ancient Greece, women were not even allowed to attend. During the first few decades of the twentieth century the IOC had remained opposed to women's participation. However, when the Federation Sportive Feminine Internationale began to stage Women's World Games, the IOC and the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) agreed to include track and field events for the first time in the 1928 Games in Amsterdam.

A similar story of direct action and persuasion can be told of the subsequent advancement made by women in the Olympic Movement. In most cases, this took a combination of dramatic performances by female athletes and public agitation by athletes and coaches, coordinated with careful behind-the-scenes lobbying. The addition of the women's marathon to the 1984 Olympic Games is an example of this coordination, and the inclusion of women's water polo in 2000 is another.

It was the water polo final, played on Day 8, that epitomised the celebration of women's participation in the Olympic Games. Australia and the USA met in the final of what had been an extremely exciting six-team tournament, played at heights of skill that fully justified the sport's inclusion. Many of the players, coaches and officials who participated in the final had played leading roles in the campaign for the inclusion of women's water polo at these Games. The outcome didn't matter. The first medal final was an inspiring victory for women in sport.

Women had begun playing water polo at a high level in the early 1970s. By 1978, women's water polo was a demonstration sport at the World Championships. A year later, the sport staged its first World Cup and by 1986 had met the criteria for an Olympic sport and been made a medal sport at the World Championships. More and more women joined the sport and players and coaches alike wanted to compete at the Olympic Games. However, first Seoul, then Barcelona and Atlanta passed without the presence of women's water polo.

In 1994, American, Australian, Canadian and Dutch officials and athletes met to coordinate a strategy to have women's

water polo included in Sydney. Their first efforts were sharply rebuffed. This only encouraged the women's water polo community to step up its campaign. In 1997, talk about legal action to ensure inclusion, and a protest at the Canada Cup competition, highlighted the cause. A few weeks later, when the FINA president arrived in Sydney to review preparations for the Games, Australian players conducted an airport demonstration, and promised more of the same until their sport was included in the Games. Within weeks, women's water polo was added to the Sydney program. The IOC subsequently decided that no sport would be added to the Olympic Games program in future without including an equal number of events for women.

The final on Day 8, before a record crowd of 17 000, turned out to be just as dramatic as the struggle for the sport's inclusion. In a tightly contested defensive match, the teams were tied 3–3 until the final second, when Australia's Yvette Higgins found the net through a forest of arms to give her team the championship. The US coach, Guy Baker, initially disputed the decision, unsure whether Higgins was in fact entitled to shoot at that point. But the referee made a decision, and a few moments later Baker congratulated the winners graciously. "If that's the [referee's] decision, then I agree with it."

Australian captain Bridgette Gusterson was equally gracious in victory. "The Australians and the Americans were probably the biggest campaigners to get women's water polo into the Olympic Games, so it's really fitting we two fought it out for silver and gold," she said.

Day 8

Volume Two
Chapter Three



1. In an unprecedented show of enthusiasm for women's water polo, the Australian public were stunned by the performances at the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre. The Australian team won the gold medal, lifting the popularity of women's sport to new heights
2. Fans cheer for the home team during the women's match between Australia and Canada



CHRIS ELFESS/SPORT THE LIBRARY



NIC ELIUS/THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

In the women's 4 x 100 m medley relay, the US team of Barbara Bedford, Megan Quann, Jenny Thompson and Dara Torres smashed the existing world record. This race earned Thompson her eighth gold medal, a record for a female swimmer. The Australian team won silver, and also finished inside the old world record.

In the last swimming race of this Olympic Games, the US men's team won the 4 x 100 m medley relay and set a new world record. Australia took the silver and Germany the bronze. Germany had finished fourth in this event in the previous five Olympic Games.

Overall, the USA maintained its dominance in swimming in the Sydney 2000 Games, winning 13 gold medals. Australia and the Netherlands won five golds each. During the competition, an astonishing 13 world records were set, an Olympic record of its own.

Magic Moments in Athletics

Fastest in the World

At Sydney Olympic Park, at Olympic Stadium, the titles of Fastest Man and Fastest Woman in the World were bestowed for this Olympiad. Americans Maurice Greene and Marion Jones won the 100 m races for men and women respectively. Green clearly showed his domination throughout his race. Jones wept for joy at her victory and ran her victory lap entwined in the US flag and the flag of Belize, her mother's birthplace.

A First for Australia

Like Jones, Australian gymnast Ji Wallace made a lap wrapped in a flag. He won silver in the men's trampoline events, gaining Australia's first Olympic gymnastics medal of any kind. He was still circling the gymnasium in euphoria long after the other competitors had gone.

A Day for Veterans

It was Veterans' day' in some events. Czech Jan Zelezny came back from a severe shoulder injury to win an unprecedented third successive Olympic men's javelin title. Zelezny needed an enormous throw to turn back the challenge of Great Britain's Steve Backley. Backley, who had won bronze in Barcelona in 1992 and silver in Atlanta in 1996, broke Zelezny's existing Olympic record with a second throw, but Zelezny came back to clinch the championship.

Five in a Row

Briton Steven Redgrave won an unprecedented fifth consecutive rowing gold medal, this time in the men's coxless fours, along with team-mates Matthew Pinsent, his third gold in a row, Tim Foster and James Cracknell. They powered home to win, beating a fast-closing Italy, with Australia third. After this historic win, the British crew did a victory lap in their boat along the banks of the course, to enthusiastic applause from the sell-out crowd of 22 500. Redgrave was officially congratulated on the medal dais by President Juan Antonio Samaranch, who presented the nine-time world champion with a gold Olympic pin.



TONY FEDERALLSPORT

The End of the Pool

Day 8 brought the swimming competitions to a close. It had been a magnificent week for swimming, a week of superlatives. Netherlands swimmer Inge de Bruijn cemented her title as the world's fastest woman with her third Olympic gold medal, this time in the 50 m freestyle.

The 1500 m freestyle, the longest and most gruelling of the races, is extremely popular in Australia. There was added excitement for the home crowd as Kieren Perkins was attempting to become the first swimmer to win three consecutive Olympic gold medals in the race. The tension of his quest was augmented by the audience's knowledge that he had come back from a slump in form to make his last effort at world recognition. But this was not to be. Another Australian, Grant Hackett, won gold, and Perkins had to leave with silver.



NICK WILSON/ALLSPORT

3. Hundreds of thousands of Australians gathered around screens at Live Sites as well as any available television sets in order to witness the battle between Kieren Perkins and team mate Grant Hackett.

At Sydney Olympic Park's South Gate Live Site, fans without tickets for the event assembled for the race

4. Tatiana Grigorieva, pole vaulting for Australia, stuns the home crowds at the Olympic Stadium

5. Kieren Perkins is carried through the Sydney Aquatics Centre after having completed his last race before retiring from competitive swimming



DARREN MCNAMARA/ALLSPORT

Second Gold for Mountain Biking

The women's cross-country mountain bike event saw Paola Pezzo of Italy successfully defending the Olympic crown she had won in Atlanta in 1996, at the sport's debut. After a seesaw battle with Barbara Blatter of Switzerland, Pezzo took the lead, and kept it.

Third Gold for Weightlifting

Greek weightlifter Pyrros Dimas won a dramatic men's 85 kg contest to become the second weightlifter in history to win three consecutive Olympic golds. All three medallists tied on the weight of 390 kg. In such cases the lightest athlete wins, and Dimas had weighed in at 84.06 kg, lighter than silver medallist Marc Huster of Germany by 0.16 kg.

Clean Sweep for Russian Federation

The Russian Federation's Alexandre Moskalenko, who came out of retirement to pursue Olympic gold in the first ever men's trampoline event, realised his dream. He led the Russian Federation to a sweep of the trampolining golds. In another first-ever event, Russian Federation divers Dmitri Saoutine and Igor Loukachine won the men's synchronized 10 m platform title.

The crowds swelled the spirit of the Games and inspired the teams playing and individuals performing. The vociferous home crowd was equally enthusiastic, whether Australia was participating in an event or not.

Halfway, and Still Dancing

A free concert was given in the Domain to support the excitement of this 'Super Saturday'. It featured New Zealander and former Split Enz member Neil Finn, with an appearance by Australian singer and songwriter Paul Kelly. Around 100 000 attended, eager to extend the experience of the day.

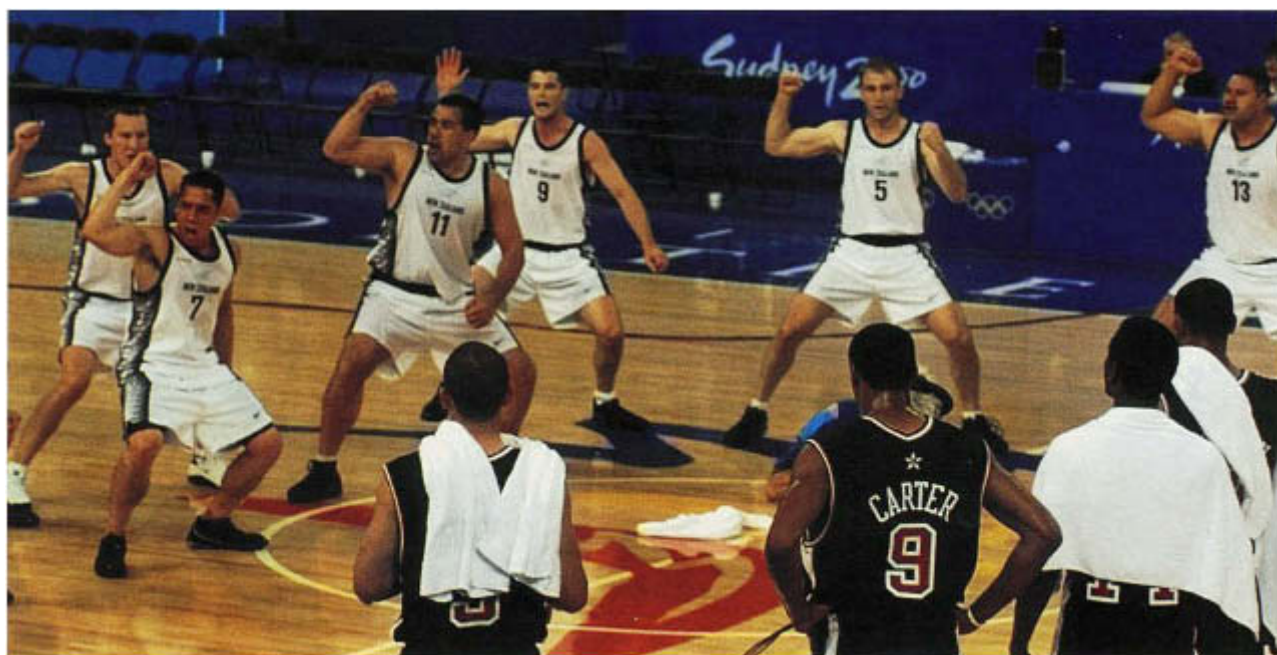
Many thousands of others visited the Live Sites. The night-time Legs on the Wall performance at Circular Quay was very popular. In its conception it reinforced the idea that the Sydney 2000 Games was really one giant party: high on city buildings, dancers abseiled and danced as they dangled, with lights and dance music to add a note of festivity.

On Sydney Harbour, regular day-time ferry services had to slow down to accommodate the sailing events. This was the only time there was a real transport squeeze on the Harbour.

The halfway point of the 2000 Games passed with words of praise from the IOC. "The organisation here has been everything we would have hoped for," said IOC Vice-President Richard Pound. The Vice-President said that the sponsors could not have been happier with Sydney. "The only complaint the sponsors have is that none of their guests want to go home." He referred also to the weather, which was constantly being remarked on for its unseasonable warmth, "If the weather holds out, it will end up being magic."

But for many the magic was there anyway, because all the right ingredients were in place. One of them was the recognition of women athletes' integral role in the Olympic Games. With this in place, all women felt that the Sydney 2000 Games were truly their own.

Day 8

Volume Two
Chapter Three

MICHAEL CONROY/AP PHOTO



GRAHAM EDWARDS/CITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES

6. Pyrros Dimas of Greece, who won the 85 kg class weightlifting gold against Marc Huster of Germany, is lifted off his feet by Huster (left) and George Asanidze of Georgia

7. Legs on the Wall perform Home Lands on the wall of a 26-storey building at Circular Quay's Live Site. The show centres on the theme of migration, showing nine times daily

8. The US basketball team looks on as the New Zealand team performs a Haka, a traditional war dance to show respect to opponents after losing 56-102 to the USA





DAY 9 – SUNDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

The Opening Ceremony began with a circle of horses, a swirl of movement and energy that enchanted the huge audience. It was a taste of what was to come over the next 16 days: the fusion of athletic energy and crowd delight into a celebration of the power of physical effort.

It was probably the women's marathon on Day 9, at this halfway point in the Sydney 2000 Games, that evoked the highest excitement of the day. Spectators lined the route at every point, urging the runners on by the power of voice and enthusiasm.

The marathon brought the Olympic Games to the homes of Sydney's people, for the route spanned several suburbs of the widespread city as well as taking in the city centre. It brought improvements to some areas where local governments resurfaced roads and trimmed trees along the route. Some home owners, on discovering that the marathon would pass through their streets, made improvements to their homes themselves. The marathon events helped the Olympic Games to win the hearts of Sydneysiders, even those who did not attend other events.

And, for the athletes who participated, the marathon provided a look at this vast and often spectacular city and gave a sense of the multiplicity of its faces. Honouring the unique quality of this race, Sydney came onto the streets in full force to witness it. There were clusters of friends, families holding barbecues, visitors from different countries with their banners and flags, people partying outside their homes, all along the route. Along Oxford Street, the gateway to the city centre, the runners were vamped on their way by some of Sydney's most famous drag queens.

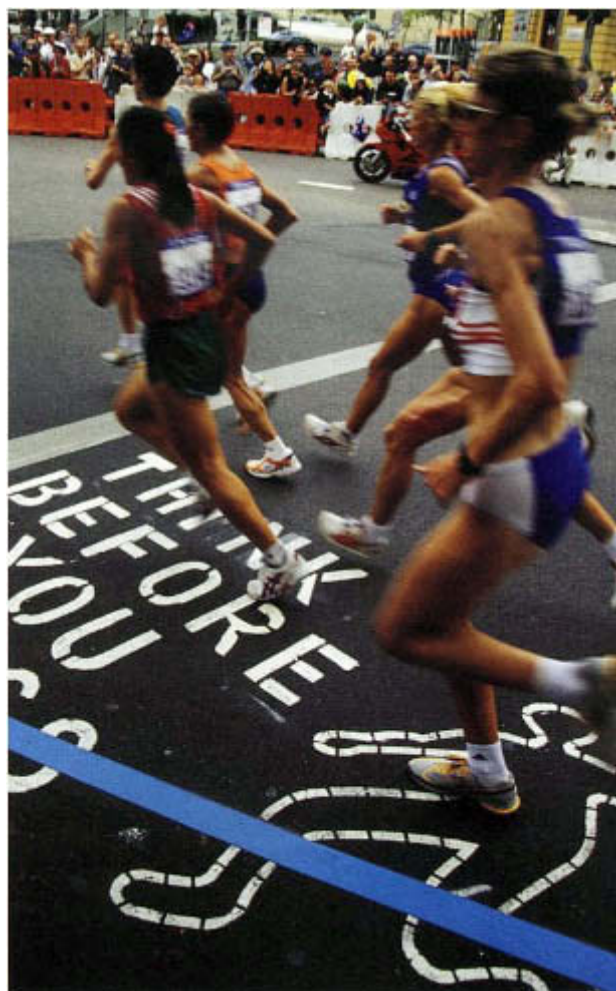
One of the features of the women's marathon was the striking, skimpy outfits of the competitors. It was claimed that there was more glamour in the Sydney 2000 Games than in any earlier Olympic Games, with many women athletes wearing make-up while competing, reflecting the world's increasing emphasis on their appearance. There were various theories to explain this phenomenon. Comments in the media during the Games suggested that pressure to look good could be traced back to the influence of sponsors and marketers, and even to the influence of the Sydney 2000 Games environment itself, where everything – the venues, the uniforms, even the weather – looked good.

More than almost any other event, the marathon dramatised for awestruck spectators the heroic struggles in sports, and in life, to which the Olympic Movement is committed. An example was the participation of Aguida Amaral from East Timor, one of only four athletes from the war-torn country to compete in the Sydney 2000 Games. While

Amaral trailed the field, she won the applause of the crowd, who bore her along by the force of their goodwill. And the participation of competitors from countries where women's sport is significantly underdeveloped acknowledged the value of individual effort and gave the race the stature of a struggle for recognition.

The Sydney 2000 Games women's marathon was held on the day that officially commemorated 100 years of women's participation in the Olympic Games. And events during its course continued marathon traditions. Joan Benoit's victory in the 1984 Los Angeles marathon had put an end to the argument that girls and women are too weak to engage in vigorous sport. In Sydney, Naoko Takahashi of Japan dispelled this myth forever. She ran away from the field, smashing Benoit's Olympic best time by more than a minute, winning in 2:23:14. Her time would have won 13 of the 24 men's Olympic marathons. It was a particularly powerful affirmation for women in Japan, where marathon running is a revered sport. Takahashi became the first Japanese national ever to win the Olympic marathon.

Spectators were reluctant to let the moment go, even long after the runners had passed. Pieces of the blue barrier tape, with the Sydney 2000 logo stamped on it, were taken as souvenirs of the event. Throughout the Sydney 2000 Games, souvenirs were avidly collected – tickets, handbooks, newspaper features, any concrete evidence at all of this once-in-a-lifetime event. Spectators also bought mementos such as caps, T-shirts and Sydney 2000 mascot figures in great numbers. Sales far outstripped expectations.



Day 9
Volume Two
Chapter Three



JULIAN ANDREWS/FAIRFAX

1. The women's marathon stopped traffic on the Harbour Bridge, as competitors embark on the 42.195 km journey to the Olympic Stadium
2. Cheering crowds line the marathon course in Centennial Park
3. Runners leave picturesque North Sydney, the starting point for one of the toughest Olympic routes to date

Day 9
Volume Two
Chapter Three



ANDY ZANELI/FAIRFAX

Some special souvenirs had a high market value. The shoe tossed into the crowd by runner Maurice Greene after his victory in the 100 m the day before was given a value of A\$100 000 or more, and the 20-year-old who caught it sought legal advice on what to do with his bounty. Eric the Eel's goggles sold for A\$4642, and a toy wombat named Fatso was also a highly prized object. Fatso, the invention of comedians Roy and HG for their TV show *The Dream*, became an unofficial icon of the Sydney 2000 Games.

Souvenir collectors were out in force. Every day a dozen of them scratched through bins at Sydney Olympic Park, looking for popcorn boxes and beer cups with the Olympic logo. Volunteers were offered high prices for the distinctive turquoise raincoats that formed part of their uniform. It was as if large numbers of those who attended the Games, enchanted by what they saw, wanted to carry away with them physical reminders of their experiences.

Organisers continued to help spectators extend the excitement of the Games experience. On Day 9, a concert was held at the Domain to link with the women's marathon and, as with the triathlon, to continue the celebrations. The concert was titled 'Kids' Domain', and it featured popular Australian children's entertainers, such as the Wiggles and Bananas in Pyjamas, and characters such as Thomas the Tank Engine.

The Sydney 2000 Games were indeed a kids' domain. Large parks and open spaces at the Live Sites made it easy for people to take their children along. At Sydney Olympic Park and at railway stations, families with strollers were given the status of wheelchair users in queues and at entrances, and were also offered shuttlebus services to access distant areas of Sydney Olympic Park.

There were well-supervised stroller bays at all venues. Children were entertained by stilt-walkers and other forms of street theatre at waiting points and transport areas. They ran through the fountains outside the Olympic Stadium, cooling off in the heat, and climbed the low walls and other structures edging Olympic Boulevard.

Other cultural events on Day 9 showed the organisers' plan to involve people in Sydney, both residents and visitors, in as many aspects of the city's Olympic Games celebrations as possible. As part of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival, there were performances by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, New Zealand's Tainui artists, Aboriginal company Bangarra Dance Theatre, and the Australian Ballet.

A Change in the Weather

After the marathoners had had their day in the sun, the weather broke, returning to temperatures more typical of the season and bringing rain. By late afternoon, storm clouds had joined the spectators travelling to Sydney Olympic Park. And for the remainder of the day the effects of the weather demonstrated just one of the many ways an athlete's chances of success can be influenced. There was an added tension as nature's unpredictability crossed paths with athletic skill.

The skies opened up on the evening's competitions, sending the already seated crowd scabbling for their ponchos – umbrellas were barred from the venues – and complicating the competition in those sports where a firm takeoff is essential.

In the women's triple jump final, Bulgarian Tereza Marinova hit the board perfectly and produced a national record of 15.20 m. Olena Hovorova of the Ukraine reached 14.96 m for bronze and Tatyana Lebedeva of the Russian Federation 15.00 m for silver. Generally, the swirling winds and rain descending produced more fouls than jumps, however.

In the men's high jump, Sergey Kliugin of the Russian Federation won with a modest leap of 2.35 m, with the next seven jumpers reaching 2.32 m. Under the extremely difficult conditions no one was able to go higher. Silver and bronze were



MICHAEL STEELE/ALLSPORT



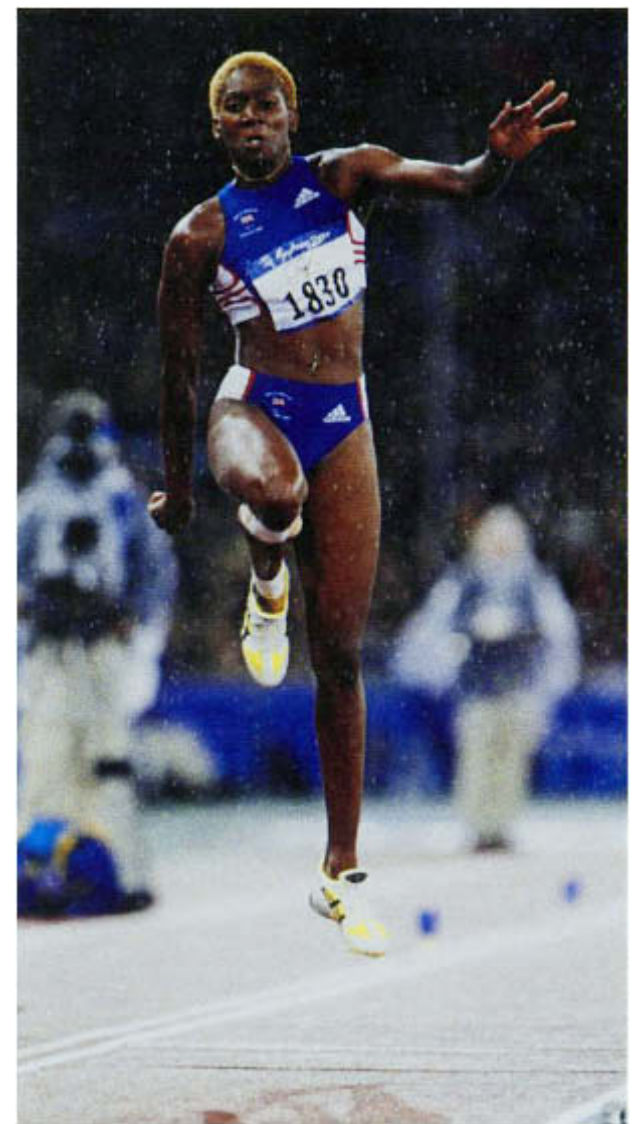
STEPHEN MUNDAY/ALLSPORT

4. Lucky catchers Ben Harper and Brian de la Porta: Maurice Greene's shoes are a valuable souvenir of the Sydney Games

5. A track official takes cover from the rain as the weather breaks at the end of Day 9

6. The evening session of athletics was a wet affair, soaking competitors in the men's high jump and women's heptathlon and triple jump

7. Ashia Hansen of Great Britain braves the weather during the women's triple jump



MIKE HEWITT/ALLSPORT

awarded to defending champion Javier Sotomayor of Cuba and Abderrahmane Hammad of Algeria on the fewer-misses rule.

The heptathlon was almost over by the time the rain came. In the final event of the competition, the 800 m, Great Britain's Denise Lewis ran through the pain of an injured Achilles tendon to take gold.

First for the Day

USA Diving Firsts

Diving took centre stage at the Sydney International Aquatic Centre. Laura Wilkinson gave the USA its first Olympic platform title since 1988, and its first women's 10 m platform champion since 1964, when she outperformed the Chinese favourite Li Na in the last few dives to win gold.

Magic Moments in Sport

Fickle Fate

In gymnastics, in the warmth of the SuperDome, the element of chance was once more in evidence. World champion Alexei Nemov of the Russian Federation faltered mid-performance in the men's pommel horse event, and finished third. Romanian police officer Marius Urzica won with a fast, exciting scissors routine, landing confidently and raising two fists in the air.

This was not Nemov's best day. Earlier, Latvia's little known Igors Vihrovs had captured the men's floor individual competition, dropping Nemov to silver.

But for others the day was more auspicious. After the disappointment of the all-around gymnastics event, Svetlana Khorkina of the Russian Federation successfully defended her 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games championship in the uneven bars. The Russian Federation's Elena Zamolodtchikova, reigning world champion on the vault, won gold once more.

Two Hats in One Day

World No.1 Wang Nan of China claimed victory over world No.2 Li Ju in women's singles table tennis. Wang and Li had been on the same side of the table on Day 7, winning the doubles together.

Sails to the Wind

Sailing on Sydney Harbour brought excitement for Australia. Roman Hagara and Hans Peter Steinacher from Austria scored enough points to win the Tornado catamaran event with two races to spare. Australians Darren Bundock and John Forbes clinched the silver with one race to go, but world champions Roland Gaebler and Rene Schwall of Germany needed all 11 races to capture the bronze.

Three in a Row

It was the third Olympic crown in a row for weightlifter Akakios Kakiasvilis. Winning the men's 94 kg division, he became the second Greek in as many days to win an Olympic weightlifting crown in three successive Games.

Mighty Mouse Conquers the Mountain

France's Miguel Martinez, affectionately nicknamed Mighty Mouse, scored a mountain bike hat-trick on Day 9, winning



GRAHAM EDWARDS/CITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES

Olympic gold in the men's mountain bike race. His win was very convincing – some 63 seconds ahead of silver medallist, Belgian Filip Meirhaege.

A Party Venue for Everyone

With many Games events now complete, great numbers of athletes joined the revellers across Sydney, partying with the same vigour they had shown in competition. Those who were recognised – many wore their team uniforms – were given a tumultuous reception at celebration spots. And there was a party venue for every visiting country. The Japanese could meet at Japan House; the South Africans at the Daintree Cafe; the Australians at the Last Lap, but many also chose to join the street parties at the Live Sites.

With competition by day and partying by night, the city of Sydney was overflowing with energy. Despite the revels, however, Games organisation continued to be meticulous. IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch cancelled the daily coordination meeting for Day 9, showing his confidence in the organisation of the Games.

And it was the spirit of cooperation and goodwill, the fusion of energy and enthusiasm between spectator and sportsperson, that made this confidence justifiable.



10

NEWSPIX

Day 9
Volume Two
Chapter Three



9

PATRICK KOVARIK/AFP

8. Pin trading has taken root in the Olympic community and Sydney's Darling Harbour was crowded with professional pin hunters as well as curious visitors

9. French mountainbiker Miguel Martinez holds up his gold medal and a wallaby after his victory at Fairfield City Farm

10. Dutch swimmer Inge de Bruijn celebrates her multiple records and medals at the Heineken House in Darling Harbour





DAY 10 – MONDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

The world held its breath. And then there stood a small woman in white, ringed by a circle of water, a circle of flame. At the Opening Ceremony, Cathy Freeman was Australia's vision of hope.

On Day 10, the focus returned to the symbol for peace and Reconciliation in Australia - and hope for sporting victory. It was Cathy Freeman's big night, the women's 400 m final, and thousands were preparing for it, making their way to Sydney Olympic Park, travelling to the Live Sites or gathering around television sets at home.

At around 8 pm conversation stopped. In the stadium, a record turnout of 112 524 spectators stood and cheered in nervous anticipation. At the Live Sites, people also rose to their feet, and marshals turned away as many spectators as they had during the Opening Ceremony.

It was the same throughout Australia and in expatriate communities around the world. Around 8.8 million people in Australia tuned their televisions to Channel 7. In Singapore, 10 000 expatriates gathered to watch.

The signs were auspicious. The Aboriginal runner was the host country's best chance in athletics. She was also running for Australia's 100th Olympic gold medal that night. But, more than that, many felt she was running for the future of the country, the chance for Reconciliation between the indigenous peoples and later arrivals.

Ever since the IOC had awarded the 2000 Olympic Games to Sydney, Reconciliation had been a theme of the Games. At first expressed tentatively, it grew with the Festival of the Dreaming, the 1997 Olympic Arts Festival, which highlighted indigenous arts and performances from around the world, in particular those of Australia. It rose again as a theme in May 2000, when 250 000 walked across Sydney Harbour Bridge in the March for Reconciliation. It grew to a crescendo during the stirring Opening Ceremony. When Freeman lit the Olympic cauldron, she came to personify the desire for Reconciliation.

Every athlete who enters the Olympic Games with even the slightest chance of a medal carries the burden of expectation. But very few athletes in Olympic Games history have been under as much pressure as Freeman.

The defending 400 m world champion and Atlanta runner-up, she was always picked to win at Sydney. She became the hot favourite when two-time Olympic gold medallist, Marie-Jose Perec of France, mysteriously left Sydney before the race, on the night of Day 6. But nothing can be taken for granted in an Olympic Games final.

Despite the enormous pressure, Freeman remained disciplined and focused. Spectators at the stadium and in front of television sets roared with delight at her performance. She ran a magnificent race, powering her way to a comfortable win past Jamaica's Lorraine Graham (silver) and Great Britain's Katharine Merry (bronze). Australia was relieved – and overjoyed.

After her win, Freeman immediately took off her hood and sat for three minutes in disbelief. "There has been a lot of pressure. It's a dream I've had since I was a little girl, that's why I'm emotional." She did the traditional victory lap around the stadium, but it was a lap with a difference. Barefoot she carried the Australian flag intertwined with the red, yellow and black Aboriginal flag. Everyone cheered, and many wept. It was a telling moment. In 1994, when Freeman won the 400 m at the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Canada, she was chastised for carrying the Aboriginal flag in her victory lap. In just six years, Australia had taken a transformational leap forward.

It was not only fellow Australians she inspired. Waneek Horn-Miller, an indigenous athlete from Canada, said that Freeman's race "... made my Olympic Games. We were watching her from all around the world."

Freeman herself had been empowered by the change. "I was totally overwhelmed because I could feel the crowd just totally around me, all over me. I felt the emotion – everybody's emotion and joy. It dissolved into every pore in my body," she said after her run.

There were other thrilling accomplishments at the track on Day 10. Michael Johnson of the USA became the first



NICK MORITHE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

Day 10
Volume Two
Chapter Three



1. A young fan cheers for Cathy Freeman during the medal ceremony after the women's 400 m final
2. Freeman's family hug after the race
3. The race most Australians had waited for brought the country to a near-standstill. People gathered at the Martin Place Live Site, as well as all other available screens and in the Olympic Stadium itself, to cheer Cathy Freeman on to her gold medal



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NIC ELLIS/THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD



KATSUHI KASAHARA/AP PHOTO



ERIC MILLER/REUTERS

4. Crowd flow at Sydney Olympic Park is monitored from observation platforms. A Spectator Services volunteer prepares for the day
5. Norway's Fritz Aanes somersaults following his win over Israel's Gotcha Tsitsiashvili in the 85 kg wrestling qualifying round
6. The Australian softball team meets the US team again on Day 10 after their earlier surprise upset. Australia's Fiona Hanes grimaces after being hit on the face by baserunner Jennifer Brundage, who was later ruled out for interference. In the end, Australia had to concede victory to the US
7. Anier Garcia of Cuba takes a lap of honour after winning gold in the men's 110 m hurdles

man to win consecutive gold medals in the 400 m. Johnson destroyed the field over the final 100 m, letting up with 10 m to go. He hit the tape in 43.80 seconds and smiled, acknowledging the ovation from the Australian crowd. Fellow countryman Alvin Harrison finished in 44.40 seconds for silver and Gregory Haughton of Jamaica ran a personal best of 44.70 seconds for bronze.

Ethiopia's Haile Gebrselassie became the third man to win back-to-back Olympic gold in the men's 10 000 m, but it took another of his spectacular kicks to do so. With 100 m remaining, his longtime rival, world cross-country champion Paul Tergat of Kenya, unleashed a devastating sprint. But somehow Gebrselassie found an even higher gear in response. He nipped past Tergat in the final metre winning by nine-hundredths of a second with a time of 27:18.20.

The excited crowd was aware that Great Britain's triple jumper Jonathan Edwards was jumping to victory in more than just the Sydney 2000 Games. His gold on Day 10 completed his set of titles: World, European, Commonwealth and now Olympic champion. To crown his victory, he jumped a season's best at this, his fourth Olympic Games making him the first British man to win the Olympic triple jump since 1908. And, to enhance the brilliance of the event, silver medallist Yoel Garcia of Cuba and bronze medallist Denis Kapustin of the Russian Federation also produced season's bests.

In the men's 110 m hurdles, Anier Garcia of Cuba produced a near-flawless run to upstage his rivals. Both he and silver medal



JEFF HAYNES/AP

winner Terrence Trammell of the USA achieved personal bests. It was a night of superlatives in sport.

A Night of Firsts

Track and Field

Cathy Freeman's race, and the excitement it engendered, seemed to take other athletes to new heights that night. In another remarkable race, Romania's Gabriela Szabo held off Ireland's Sonia O'Sullivan to win the women's 5000 m, in a new Olympic record time. O'Sullivan's silver made her the first Irishwoman to win an Olympic track medal.

The Olympic women's pole vault debut also brought the crowd to its feet. Stacy Draglia of the USA failed twice to vault 4.50 m before making it on her final attempt. She also missed on her first try of 4.55 m after Tatiana Grigorieva, a Russian-born Australian, cleared the height. But Draglia made that jump and won gold by clearing 4.60 m. Grigorieva, the eventual silver medallist, failed once to vault 4.6 m before trying to win gold with a jump of 4.65 m, but she missed on both attempts.

Maria Mutola won Mozambique's first ever Olympic gold in the women's 800 m in a close finish; Austria's Stephanie Graf won silver, just edging past Great Britain's Kelly Holmes, who took the bronze.

A First for Iran

On the same day, Hossein Tavakoli won the Islamic Republic of Iran's first gold medal of the Sydney 2000 Games in the men's weightlifting, 105 kg class. Tavakoli lifted a total of 425 kg, 2.5 kg more than Bulgarian Alan Tsagaev. Said Saif Asaad of Qatar took the bronze, his country's second medal in Olympic history.

A First for Spain

The final day of the artistic gymnastics competition at the Sydney SuperDome saw thrilling competitions in the men's vault, parallel bars and horizontal bar, and the women's beam and floor events. Spain's Gervasio Deferr was able to win his country's first medal in artistic gymnastics by taking gold on the vault. On the parallel bars, Li Xiaopeng of China performed last, and scored highest.

Lee Joo-Hyung of Korea took silver and bronze went to new all-around gold medallist Alexei Nemov of the Russian Federation. Nemov went on to win gold in the horizontal bar event. Tying with Benjamin Varonian of France, Nemov won on a tie-breaking rule. Lee Joo-Hyung won the bronze.

A First for China

The gold medal on the women's beam was won by China's Liu Xuan, making her the first Chinese woman to win an individual Olympic gold on this gymnastic apparatus.

First on the Floor

The women's floor final attracted enormous attention, and the expert acrobatics and attractive choreography delighted the crowds. The Russian Federation enjoyed a double victory, with Elena Zamolodtchikova receiving gold and Svetlana Khorkina silver.



TIM CLAYTON/FAIRFAX

Magic Moments in Sport

Duelling on the Harbour

In the 49er skiff class at the sailing regatta, Finland's Thomas Johanson and Jyrki Jarvi had wrapped up the gold medal two days earlier when they took an unbeatable lead with one race remaining. That left Britons Ian Barker and Simon Hiscocks to fight off a late charge from Americans Jonathan and Charlie McKee. But fight them off they did, and Great Britain hung on to take silver, with the USA taking bronze.

Clean Sweep for China

China completed a clean sweep of the table tennis gold medals with top seed Kong Linghui winning a thrilling men's singles against Sweden's Jan-Ove Waldner. Another Chinese player, Liu Guoliang, won bronze.

Beach Volleyball Delights Crowd

Beach volleyball had another memorable day at the Bondi Beach volleyball facility. Audience participation and body

display were all part of the game on Day 10. The Games' best announcer, Lifesaver Dave, led the crowd in slow waves, fast waves and a spirited rendition of *Happy Birthday* to Princess Martha Louise of Norway.

Beach volleyball was proving itself an ideal sport for the Games of the new Millennium. First developed on the beaches of sunny California in the 1920s, it became a significant sport in the 1980s when the sun, sand and surf culture became popular around the world. The two-person game was made an official discipline of the International Volleyball Federation in 1986, and was first included in the Olympic Games in 1996. While it became a sport of incredible fitness and endurance, it never lost its populist roots.

Bondi Beach rocked in celebration as the Australian pair Natalie Cook and Kerrie Pottharst won gold in the women's final over the No.1-ranked Brazilians Adriana Behar and Shelda Bede. It was a hotly contested game, but in the end the Australians prevailed, largely due to some big serving. The victory eruption could be heard for miles.

Entertainers kept spectators alert and high-spirited. By now, the controversy which had surrounded the construction of the Bondi Beach volleyball stadium was almost forgotten. The location, the crowds, the stirring entertainment and the sport itself all saw to that. Previously the cause of protests by residents, the stadium became a fundamental segment in the circle of energy and excitement that linked the widespread sporting venues during the Sydney 2000 Games.

But the focus for Australians on this day remained a small woman, leading a celebration of not only her own victory, but also that of the power of reconciliation and the desire for peace.

Day 10

Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day
10



DARREN ENGLAND/ALLSPORT

8. Crowd pleasers Natalie Cook and Kerrie Pottharst savour the medal ceremony while defeated Brazilian team Shelda Bede and Adriana Behar cry over their lost chances

9. Fans at the beach volleyball celebrate every match and every point

10. Despite the Beach Volleyball Centre's music and party atmosphere, beachlife goes on as usual



JASON CHILDS/SPORT THE LIBRARY





DAY 11 – TUESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER

At the end of the Opening Ceremony, great spheres of light glowed in the sky in the firework display to celebrate the Olympic Games.

And throughout the Games coloured lights circled about the skies, to celebrate Sydney and keep the spotlight on the splendour of the city.

Even bad weather could not dampen the splendour of Sydney during the Games. A thunderstorm on Day 11 brought traffic to a halt, but once more careful planning was able to right the situation. Emergency buses were called in for support, and the good nature of the crowds turned a potential disaster into an adventure.

At night the city glowed, set ablaze throughout the Games by lightshows. Lasers and coloured lights from the Sydney Skyline Spectacular danced above the city centre's tower blocks in spectacular 10-minute shows. There was also the nightly spectacle of the Sydney Opera House's vast sails being illuminated by a 90-minute display. The colours were visible to every visitor to the harbour and the area around Circular Quay. The two shows alternated so that the city skies were awash with colour throughout the night. On this night the Skyline Spectacular painted the sky and buildings red – there were three block-colourwash sequences in all, blue for the first week of the Olympic Games, red for the second, and gold for 1 October. Over the 17-day period, 52 shows illuminated Sydney's night skies.

Static glowing rings complemented the moving lights to complete the picture of a city girded by light. The illuminated Olympic rings on the Harbour Bridge and the Martin Place Live Site blazed on, punctuated by the intermittent colourwashes across the city, and emphasising the presence of the Olympic Games in the city.

In the United Parcel Service (UPS) Aqua Spectacular at Cockle Bay, laser images added to the dazzle. Holographic images, projected onto huge semi-circular waterscreens, put magic in the sky for visitors to Darling Harbour.

The size of crowds in the city was significantly reduced on Day 11 because of the bad weather. There was less physical presence at the Live Sites on this day, but people were still watching the Games at the official venues, at home – and world wide.

More people watch and follow Olympic Games than any other event. During the 2000 Games, millions of spectators attended events in Sydney while an estimated peak audience of four billion, with a cumulative audience of 25 billion, tuned in around the world to the television coverage, and millions

more followed events through the older media of print and radio. The increase in Internet interest in the Olympic Games has been exponential. In Atlanta, the Olympic site received 187 million hits in total. This increased to 634 million hits in Nagano. In Sydney, the official Games website, www.olympics.com, received more hits on a daily basis than Nagano did overall. On Day 11, it set an international record for daily traffic to a single site, with a total of 874.5 million hits. In addition, hundreds of other sites, including those set up by individual athletes in the Olympic Village, were receiving record numbers of hits. Visitors were given the opportunity to email the athletes, free of charge, from the IBM Surf Shack at Darling Harbour.

Before the Games, the domestic media had often been negative, prophesying doom for Sydney during the Olympic Games. Disaster would strike, it was claimed, in the form of traffic problems and huge financial costs to the city and to Australia. Many members of the public were of the same view.

Considerable numbers of Sydneysiders left the city for the duration of the Games, taking advantage of cheap airfares for overseas travel on aircraft that would otherwise have flown home largely empty. Once the Games were on, however, the spotlight on Sydney revealed a city well able to deal with massive crowds and large-scale undertakings, and the doomsayers were silenced.

The success of the Sydney 2000 Games also cast a glowing light on the relationship between the Olympic Movement and the mass media. This relationship has at times been stormy, but is for the most part mutually beneficial, as the media brings the Olympic message to wider and wider audiences, and important revenue to the Olympic Movement. Sydney 2000 Games organisers acknowledged this role, and made special arrangements to enhance it. The Sydney 2000

Day 11
Volume Two
Chapter Three



1. The Sydney Games were covered by a multitude of photographers, feeding pictures to newspapers and magazines around the world
2. A memorial service was held on Day 11 to commemorate the terrorist attack and subsequent deaths of eleven Israelis during the 1972 Games in Munich
3. Sydney's skyline was lit up by laser shows, creating an atmosphere of celebration



MARK BAKER/REUTERS



NOEL KESEL/NEWSPIX

Day 11
Volume Two
Chapter Three



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KEVIN T GILBERTAFP

4. Venus Williams is the focus of media attention after her victory over Monica Seles
5. Before Felicia Ballanger's race in the 500 m time trial, broadcasters get a close up shot
6. C. J. Hunter, US shotputter, addresses a press conference after it was revealed that he had tested positive to a banned steroid
7. Cyclists in the women's road race pass a 'Go Anna' sign in support of Australian rider Anna Wilson



CLIVE BRUNSILLALSPORT

Games were covered by an estimated 20 000 journalists and media staff. Of that number, about 12 000 were employed by broadcasters with radio and television rights for the Games; 5000 were print journalists accredited by their NOCs, and 3000 were unaccredited journalists from all media. In each case, Games organisers made a special effort to assist media staff's coverage of the Sydney Games.

Television rights holders had access to the International Broadcast Centre (IBC) and camera positions at competition venues. Accredited print and radio journalists could use the Main Press Centre (MPC), and designated press and photographic positions. The Sydney Media Centre was created for unaccredited journalists and broadcasters, the first facility of its kind in Olympic history.

The Sydney Olympic Broadcasting Organisation (SOBO), the host broadcaster, provided feed from every venue to more than 200 rights holders from around the world, and studio facilities and other services at the IBC. The Sydney IBC was the largest ever, occupying over 70 000 sq m in a rented warehouse. The MPC spread across six pavilions and 35 000 sq m. In close proximity to 15 sports, the Olympic Village and the Media Village, with convenient bus links and good cafes and licensed restaurants, the IBC and the MPC facilities received many compliments.

The provision of the Sydney Media Centre came from a lesson learnt at the Atlanta Olympic Games. When the bombing of Olympic Park happened at Atlanta, there was no way of conveying information to the many thousands of unaccredited media staff. A considerable amount of misinformation was promulgated as a result, with no way of correcting it.

Building on this experience, the Australian Federal Government and the New South Wales State Government each contributed A\$2 million to establish a media centre that would provide for the unaccredited media.

Open to all bona fide television broadcasters, print and radio journalists, photographers and web broadcasters, it included workstations for 96 reporters, a 500-seat news conference centre, a 50-seat briefing and interview room, an image resource library, and an outdoor studio for television interviews with an attractive backdrop of the city skyline and Sydney Harbour.

The conditions for covering the Games at the venues were extremely supportive. In the press tribunes, each desktop station had a television monitor with a channel for each venue and, in sports such as athletics and gymnastics, each discipline. Immediately after each competition, couriers brought the printed results, and made arrangements for interviews.

The difference in time zones made the situation very difficult for NBC, the US broadcasting channel for the Olympic Games. It decided not to show live events, but to tape and replay in prime time up to 14 hours later. Because of this factor, and competing sporting events in the USA at the time, NBC's TV audiences were down from Barcelona and Atlanta.

There was much debate in the media about this issue, and some talk of the Games no longer being held in a Southern Hemisphere country because of the effects on US viewing. But NBC management refuted such an idea.

Drug Dilemmas

The media made the battle against performance-enhancing drugs a running story of the Sydney 2000 Games. On Day 11, investigative reporters were on the phone to everyone in the North American athletics community after it was revealed that shot putter C. J. Hunter, husband of sprint champion Marion Jones, had earlier tested positive to large amounts of nandrolone, and that US athletics officials had refused to divulge the names of 15 other athletes who had tested positive before the Games. At a press conference, a tearful Hunter denied that he had ever taken drugs.

On the same day, a shocked Andreea Raducan of Romania was stripped of her all-around gold medal in gymnastics after testing positive to the banned drug pseudoephedrine. She had taken the drug in cold medication prescribed by a physician with the Romanian team. Raducan's appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport was unsuccessful, although she was allowed to keep the gold and silver she had won in other competitions. The Romanian physician was banished from the Sydney and Athens Games.



ANDREW MEARES/FAIRFAX



Also, regrettably, the IOC Medical Commission announced that it had had problems with the first batch of tests for the endurance drug erythropoietin (EPO) at the Games, rendering the results invalid.

Magic Sporting Moments

It was quiet at the Olympic Stadium as athletics took a rest day. However, much was happening at the other competition venues, with bad weather adding drama to several events.

Wet-weather Volleyball

Eric Fonoimoana and Dain Blanton from the USA won gold in men's beach volleyball, defeating Brazilians Jose Marco Melo and Ricardo Santos 2-0. In wet and blustery conditions, the match lasted more than 100 minutes. IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch, clad in a Sydney 2000 plastic poncho, joined in the crowd antics, taking part in several 'waves'.

Cycling in the Rain

Leontien Zijlaard of the Netherlands outprinted an elite field in the first of the women's road cycling events. Rain began to fall during the third lap of the seven-lap race, making conditions slippery for the 57 riders. Several crashes occurred, but no one was seriously injured. Zijlaard's medal was her third at the Sydney Games.

Dramatic Finish to Diving

China's Xiong Ni pulled off a dramatic victory to retain his Olympic 3 m springboard diving title. In his final dive, the last of the competition, he passed Dmitri Saoutine of the Russian Federation, who had been leading by more than 10 points. Saoutine performed poorly on his final dive, slipping to third.

Swimming in Synch

In July, synchronized swimmers Olga Brusnikina and Maria Kisseleva of the Russian Federation had been stripped of their European title after Kisseleva failed a drug test. But in Sydney they gave the Russian Federation its first Olympic synchronized swimming title when they won the duet final.

The Russian Federation team were in a class of their own and received nine perfect 10 scores – four for technical merit and all five for artistic impression during the free routine.

Winning Gold in Weightlifting

Hossein Rezazadeh of the Islamic Republic of Iran broke five world records on his way to gold in the men's super heavyweight division of the weightlifting competition. His gold was Iran's second in weightlifting. German Ronny Weller had to settle for Olympic silver for the second time running.

The Winning Moment

In a dramatic 2-1 victory, the USA won its second Olympic softball gold medal, beating Japan. The USA had been the dominant team at the 1996 Atlanta Games, and had remained unbeaten since 1998. Yet the team struggled in Sydney to reach the final, whereas Japan won all of its games. The gold medal game was tied 1-1 until, in the eighth innings, a line drive to left field brought the USA home for the winning run.

The sporting competitions continued to generate their own high moments in these exciting Games. And the city where they were being played continued to present its own drama, with its whimsical weather, its wide range of activities on offer, and vivid flashes of light to illuminate its vibrancy.

Day 11
Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day
11



9
VICTORIA ARCOHOIAP PHOTO



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SHARON SMITH/THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

8. Spectators at the women's beach volleyball match between Italy and Germany had to don plastic ponchos to brave the elements, as umbrellas were not allowed in sporting venues

9. The Gymnastics Gala on Day 11, featuring gold medallists and renowned gymnasts from various disciplines, attracted a sellout crowd. Polina Lymareve and partner Andrei Jakovlev perform a lift in the acrosport mixed pairs

10. Not all Olympic fans were upset by the sudden change in weather. Ryan Nichols plays in the rain at Sydney Olympic Park





DAY 12 – WEDNESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER

In the Opening Ceremony, circles of fire and water attested to the regenerating force of the Olympic Games. In the Fire segment, fire burned through the land, renewing it. At the end, a giant fire burned triumphant in the Olympic cauldron in a ring of water, symbolic of cleansing and renewal.

The Sydney 2000 Games were billed as the 'Green Games', giving the city the opportunity to find environmentally sound solutions to energy use and garbage disposal. They were also the 'Clean Games'. In the early hours each morning, as the night owls in the Olympic Village logged out of the Internet surf shack, and the last revellers from Darling Harbour and the other Live Sites wended their way home, an army of Olympic workers moved out into the venues and streets to sweep them clean of garbage and litter.

Within a few hours the equivalent of 600 football fields were cleared of rubbish in the inner city. Out at Sydney Olympic Park, the equivalent of 150 trucks of garbage were removed every day, to be delivered to a waste transfer station for recycling. Day 12 began with the Olympic city once more spotless.

The Olympic Movement has made the environment the 'third pillar of Olympism'. The promise to provide a 'green' Games was one of the reasons Sydney was awarded the Games of the new Millennium, and the organising committee set out more than 100 objectives for an ecologically sustainable Games. Many of these commitments were fulfilled in the staging of the Sydney 2000 Games.

Sydney made its most important contributions to the environment in the design, construction and operation of venues, energy and water conservation, and waste management. One of the key environmental aims of the Sydney 2000 Games was to make a significant improvement in energy efficiency, and this was achieved. The SuperDome's rooftop solar energy system prevents the production of an extra 85 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year, and contributes surplus electricity to the New South Wales power grid. The Olympic Village has the capacity to generate more than one million kWh per year of electricity. All permanent houses have photovoltaic solar energy cells and gas-boosted solar hot-water systems, making the Olympic Village one of the world's largest solar-powered suburbs.

The Olympic venues also saved electricity by making the most of natural lighting and ventilation, while the heavy reliance on public transportation cut down on automobile emissions. The Sydney 2000 Games also set a new standard for waste management. Plates, cutlery and other necessities were biodegradable, and most waste was composted and/or recycled. "It's the first time I've used a paper straw since my childhood in Britain 30 years ago," observed a researcher at the Games.

The compost heap at the Eastern Creek Waste Management Centre was a steaming mountain, 5 m high and 100 m long, which grew by 60 tonnes a day. After the Games, the compost would be sold to the horticultural market.

Throughout the Sydney Games, athletes and spectators were actively recruited to the goals of environmentalism. Native flowers were used to make the bouquets given to medal winners, affirming the importance of species that had adapted to the New South Wales environment over time – native species usually require less water than exotic species, and play a significant role in the revegetation of damaged lands.

Potted flowers throughout the city, 930 containers of them, beautified the environment. Their colours were deliberately chosen to support the 'Look' of the Games.

In the Olympic Village, prizes were awarded to the national delegations making the best effort at recycling. "When you look closer at the different waste baskets in the dining room, you see that it is not difficult to look after the environment," said Netherlands water polo player Heleen Boering. Spectators, too, were encouraged to place waste in the appropriate composting and recycling bins.

Sydney's efforts were given a C rating overall by the international environmental organisation Greenpeace, because of "some outstanding successes but some unnecessary and



3

GRAHAM EDWARDS/CITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES

Day 12
Volume Two
Chapter Three



2

GRAHAM EDWARDS/CITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES

1. The water features at Sydney Olympic Park serve as playground and rest areas for Olympic spectators
2. Cleaners in the city work night shifts to ensure Sydney looks its best every day
3. Twenty tonnes of Olympic rubbish had to be cleared from the city each day. To cope with this, 39 garbage trucks were added to Sydney's fleet

Day 12
Volume Two
Chapter Three



BRAD NEWMAN/NEWSPIX

4. *Andreea Raducan, who was stripped of her gymnastics all-around medal on Day 11, arrives at the Court of Arbitration for Sport with Ion Tiriac, President of the Romanian NOC where their appeal to win back the medal was denied*

5. *The Australian 470 crew Jenny Armstrong and Belinda Stowell sail on Sydney Harbour shortly after their race was cancelled due to light winds*

disappointing failures", said Greenpeace Olympic campaigner Blair Palese. Among the accomplishments applauded by Greenpeace was the Olympic Village, which received a grade of A+. Among the disappointments was the decision not to remove toxic waste at Homebush Bay and the Rhodes Peninsula, but to bury it under landfill. This fill formed the grassy slopes on which many spectators picnicked during the Games.

Drug-taking athletes continued to sully the reputation of the Clean Games, however. On Day 12, doping issues caused an embarrassing moment. The gold medal favourite for the first ever women's hammer throw, Romania's Mihaela Melinte, tested positive to steroids in a pre-Games test. She was disqualified as she was about to take her first throw in the competition.

But the atmosphere continued to be radiant with energy and a sense of relaxation. With schools and tertiary institutions throughout Australia closed for the holidays, Sydney was at leisure in an atmosphere of enthusiasm and excitement. The Live Sites continued to resound to the beat of live music, and thrum to the sound of the voices of thousands of visitors. Spectators met to marvel at the finals on the big screens, and stayed to enjoy the friendly, exhilarated atmosphere. Again a cosmopolitan mix of entertainment was on offer, generating energy among spectators, invigorating all with the sense that the city was one great dance in motion. Spanish, African and Latin music kept the crowds tapping to the beat at Darling Harbour. At Martin Place, a gospel choir in the morning made way for nightclub music late that night. Once more the aerial artists moved high above the city and the aerial acrobats Legs on the Wall dangled in the air, adding more vibrancy to a city already alive with excitement.

Olympic Firsts

Longest and Largest

The longest race, with the largest number of competitors, was the men's cycling road race, over a 239.4 km course with a starting field of 154 riders from 41 different countries. The winner was Germany's Jan Ullrich.

The Oldest Woman to Win Athletics Gold

Ellina Zvereva, aged 40, of Belarus, became the oldest woman in Olympic history to win athletics gold, in discus.

Debut for Taekwondo

Michail Mouroutsos of Greece defeated Gabriel Esparza of Spain to win gold in the men's under 58 kg class in the first taekwondo tournament ever held at an Olympic Games.

First Gold in Women's Taekwondo

Australian Lauren Burns, daughter of Australian sixties pop star Ronnie Burns, took gold in the under 49 kg final. Hanne Hoegh Poulsen of Denmark, who lost the contest for bronze, had defeated Kay Poe of the USA in the first round. Poe was competing only because her best friend Esther Kim had sacrificed her own place on the US team. This story of sporting selflessness turned Kim into a celebrity at home and earned her a standing ovation in Sydney. It garnered new respect for this martial art, which teaches that cultivation of the mind and spirit is more important than winning. Kim was in Sydney to see Poe compete.

Great Moments in Sport

Triumph for USA

On Day 12, the USA ended Cuba's baseball reign. Cuba had dominated since the 1980s, winning gold at both Barcelona,



TONY PALMER/NEWS LTD

when the sport was first included, and Atlanta. The long-awaited matchup of baseball archrivals was remarkably free of the dustups and disputes that have coloured virtually all of the other games they've played. Pitcher Ben Sheets blew down the Cubans with a three-hit, no-walk performance, facing just 29 batters in pitching the USA to a 4-0 upset and the gold medal. For the third straight Olympic Games, Germany, the Netherlands and the USA finished 1-2-3 in the team dressage event. It was the fifth successive gold medal for Germany in this event.

Tiny Winning Margin

At the Olympic Stadium Nils Schumann of Germany had a paper-thin win in the men's 800 m, just millimetres ahead of pre-race favourite Wilson Kipketer of Denmark.

A Record in Tennis

The USA's Venus Williams achieved a winning record of 32 straight major tennis matches, after her 6-2, 6-4 victory in the women's singles against Elena Dementieva of the Russian Federation. Apart Steffi Graf in 1998, Williams is the only player to win Wimbledon, the US Open and the Olympic Games in the same year.

Loyal Support

Home town tennis favourites Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge won silver in the men's doubles. They were beaten by Canadians Daniel Nestor and Sebastien Lareau despite the vocal support of an enormous crowd. Support was all the more loyal as it was known that they were playing their last game as a pair at the end of a very successful joint career.

Two Doubles for Wrestling

There were two successive Olympic wins in Greco-Roman wrestling. Cuba's Filiberto Azcuy, who won the 74 kg class in Atlanta, this time took the 69 kg title. Reigning 85 kg champion Hamza Yerlikaya of Turkey also repeated by winning his division - and celebrated with a backflip.

Fickle Fate Strikes Again

Alexandre the Great was felled at the Sydney 2000 Games. The Russian Federation's Alexandre Kareline had not lost a Greco-Roman wrestling bout since 1987, and was favoured to win his fourth consecutive 130 kg Olympic title. But the little-known Rulon Gardner of the USA defeated the legendary figure.

Women's Hurdles

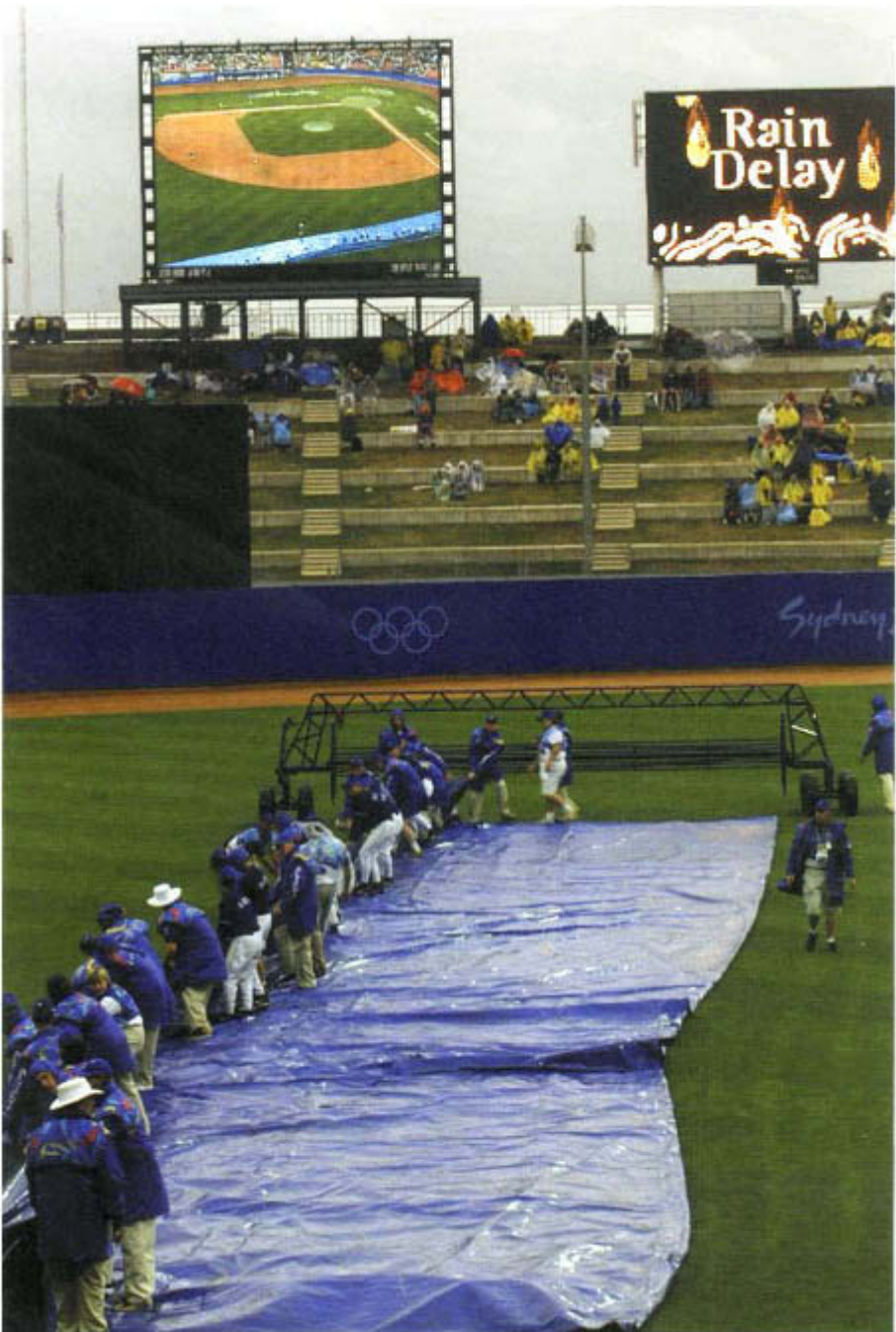
Olga Shishigina of Kazakhstan won the women's 100 m hurdles final after pre-Games favourite Gail Devers of the USA withdrew in the semis with a pull in her left hamstring. Glory Alozie of Nigeria finished second - in a particularly poignant moment. Three weeks earlier, a car had killed her fiancé, fellow Nigerian sprinter Hyginus Anugo, as he crossed a Sydney street. And the Russian Federation's Irina Privalova ran the race of her life to win in the 400 m hurdles, silencing critics who had wondered at her switch from the 100 m and 200 m sprints to a new discipline and a longer race.

It was a late night for many. As tired spectators and athletes made their way to bed, the garbage crew was setting in motion the next phase in the perpetual cycle of energy use and renewal that was the Sydney 2000 Games.



6

PETER SMITH/NEWSPIX



7

NEWSPIX

6. Lauren Burns, Australian gold medalist in the 48 kg taekwondo class, showing her form

7. As the weather deteriorated again during the baseball semifinal, the infield had to be covered for protection. After the rain delay, Korea went on to win the bronze medal match against Japan





DAY 13 – THURSDAY 28 SEPTEMBER

In the Tin Symphony segment of the Opening Ceremony, the bridge of connection and Reconciliation was honoured. This structure of steel yoked past and future, culture and culture, nation and nation. The message was clean the nation of Australia had crossed a bridge to become part of a ring of friendship and understanding that extended beyond cultural and national borders.

The Sydney 2000 Games was stamped with the message of the Olympic Movement: that all countries and cultural groups should cross the bridge to greater mutual understanding.

An Olympic Movement statement issued at the time of the Sydney 2000 Games outlined the goal of Olympism – to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practised in the Olympic spirit. This spirit requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play. Several activities in Sydney highlighted the Olympic Movement's recognition that people in situations of deprivation deserve support, assistance with sport and general protection.

On Day 13, the results of an important election in the Olympic Village were announced, one that represented a step forward for athletes' rights. The announcer was IOC Vice-President Anita Defrantz, herself a former athlete activist.

The election had allowed athletes at the Sydney 2000 Games to flex their muscles at the ballot box and in the committee rooms. Supervised by the IOC Athletes Commission, the election had the purpose of selecting eight athletes for positions on the IOC. All 11 400 athletes in the Sydney Olympic Games were eligible to vote for the 45 active and recently retired athletes from 45 countries who were standing. To be eligible, candidates had to be nominated by a national Athletes Commission, to have competed in either the 1996 Atlanta or Sydney 2000 Games, and never to have been convicted of a doping infraction. While elections had been held in Atlanta and Nagano for seats on the Athletes Commission, this was the first direct election to the IOC in Olympic history.

On Day 13, the news was out. The successful athletes, in order of number of ballots received, were pole vaulter Sergey Bubka (Ukraine), swimmer Alexander Popov (Russian Federation), swimmer Susie O'Neill (Australia), volleyball player Robert Ctvrtlik (USA), javelin thrower Jan Zelezny (Czech Republic), runner Charmaine Crooks (Canada), rower Roland Baar (Germany) and water polo player Manuel Estiarte (Spain). The first four would each serve an eight-year term, the others a four-year term. They would join seven other athletes – four elected at the Nagano Games to the Athletes Commission and three appointed by the IOC President – as full members of the IOC.

The direct election of athletes to the IOC is an outgrowth of the campaign for athletes' rights in which athletes have been involved for many generations. Athletes have been in the forefront of the struggle against doping, gender inequity and racism in sports, and the campaign for sport for all. Underlying all of these efforts is the belief that athletes should share in the responsibility for the governance of sport and thus should enjoy both voice and vote on all decision-making bodies.

The IOC did not accept with ease the idea of athletes amongst its members. It was finally persuaded by the example of articulate athlete contributions to many aspects of sport, intense lobbying by the Athletes Commission, and pressure from other athlete organisations such as Olympic Advocates Together Honourably (OATH). It relented in 1999, when reforms were initiated in response to the Salt Lake City scandal. The new rules went into effect with the Sydney 2000 Games.

There were several other noteworthy athletes' initiatives in evidence at the Sydney 2000 Games. Olympic Aid, a humanitarian organisation founded by speed skater Johann Olav Koss, raises funds for disadvantaged children and children in refugee camps around the world. At the 1994 Olympic Winter Games in Lillehammer, Koss had asked Norwegians to make a donation for every Norwegian gold medal, and US\$18 million was quickly raised. In Atlanta, Olympians Michael Jordan, Andre Agassi, Michael Johnson and Nadia Comaneci joined the appeal, and US\$13 million was raised. In Sydney, athletes donated memorabilia, and Olympic Aid auctioned them on-line. One of the donors was Victor Ramos, East Timorese boxer, who offered a boxing glove for auction. While the auction created problems for the Olympic Museum, which was also seeking the donation of memorabilia from athletes, it was remarkably successful. Ian Thorpe's autographed fast-skin racing suit was sold for A\$100 000. By the end of the Games, the auction had netted almost A\$500 000. The Australian government also donated to Olympic Aid, contributing A\$1.5 million.



BLAKE SELL/REUTERS

Day 13
Volume Two
Chapter Three

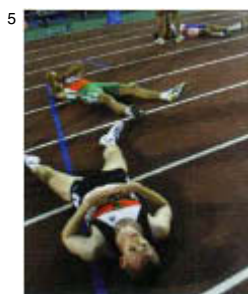


1. Venues at the Sydney Games were packed with cheering crowds
2. As a result of the athletes' election in the Olympic Village, Susie O'Neill is sworn in as an IOC member, posing with her IOC medal at the Regent Hotel
3. A child runs through the water fountain at Sydney Olympic Park



DARREN SEILER/NEWSPIX

Day 13
Volume Two
Chapter Three



CRAIG GOLDING/FAIRFAX



LAURA RAUCHAP PHOTO

4. John McLean of Australia races in the men's 1500 m final of the Paralympic demonstration event
5. Competitors in the decathlon sink to the ground after completing their last discipline, the 1500 m, after a two-day competition
6. Australia's Jane Saville, who was leading much of the women's 20 km walk, is distraught after being disqualified
7. Wang Liping crosses the finish line after the women's 20 km walk to win the gold medal

It was not only the athletes participating in the Sydney 2000 Games who were advocating change and reform to the governance of sport. Athletes from earlier generations also met in Sydney to discuss ways in which they could strengthen the Olympic Movement. At the Olympians Reunion Centre at Circular Quay, initiated by Australian 1964 swimming gold medallist Kevin Berry, Olympians from around the world met to catch up, compare notes and sign up members for the World Olympians Association (WOA), an independent global organisation founded in 1995. The WOA has huge membership potential – there are an estimated 60 000 Olympians worldwide.

On Day 13, while the Australian media congratulated Susie O'Neill on her election to the IOC, business continued as usual for most of the spectators and visitors to the city. At the Live Sites folk, groove, cabaret, jazz, arts videos, reggae and more were on offer. The mood was festive, and the spirit of friendliness and interest in people of other cultures continued to thrive.

Special Sporting Moments

The sporting events on Day 13 produced tense moments and surprise wins, highlighting the combination of skill and chance that enthralled spectators throughout the Games. Two last-minute victories produced both tension and excitement, and highlighted the theatrical qualities of the Games.

Dramatic Win for Norway

In women's football, Norway won 3–2 against the USA in double overtime. Until this point, the US team, defending Olympic champions, seemed to have the momentum. They had tied the score with just 20 seconds of the match remaining, and had had the advantage for most of the first overtime.

Last-minute Win in Taekwondo

The men's under 68 kg taekwondo final was a tight battle between two talented young fighters, but the result was determined at the very last moment by a penalty score. Sin Joon-Sik of Korea, 20, had led since the first round by a single point, but in the last round had it deducted after being warned twice. Steven Lopez, 21, of the USA, took this opportunity to score a winning point with a kick to the stomach.

Tension in Tennis

Before their doubles tennis match, sisters Venus and Serena Williams warmed up on a practice court for one hour 10 minutes – a practice virtually unheard of for them. They went out to defeat the Netherlands' Kristie Boogert and Miriam Oremans 6–1, 6–1 in a mere 49 minutes. Singles gold medallist Venus was jubilant, "For me, this is almost bigger than the singles. It's right up there because to have a victory like this, with Serena, my sister, a family member, my best friend, doesn't happen often – just to be able to stand together and succeed together on this level has been really, really good."

Number Eight

Fifteen penalties to Switzerland's 16 gave Germany gold in the equestrian team jumping final and a spectacular haul: an eighth team jumping gold medal for its collection.



MARK HORSBURGH/SPORT THE LIBRARY

Ugly Duckling Becomes a Swift

Jenny Armstrong and Belinda Stowell won Australia's first Olympic gold medal in sailing in 28 years, with victory in the women's 470 dinghy class. Revelling in the strongest winds of the regatta, the Australians steered *Ugly Duckling* into the lead on the second leg of the race. About two hours later, gold came to Australia again when world champions Tom King and Mark Turnbull won the men's 470 dinghy class.

Fourth Gold for China

Twenty-three-year-old Fu Mingxia of China joined the ranks of US divers Patricia McCormick and Greg Louganis when she won a fourth Olympic gold medal on the 3 m springboard. To add to China's booty, her team-mate Guo Jingjing won silver. More gold came when Li Na and Sang Xue won the women's 10 m synchronized platform final. Australia had not won a diving medal in 76 years, and hometown spectators exulted as Australians Rebecca Gilmore and Loudy Tourky won bronze in this event.

Fourth Time Lucky

Wang Liping of China won the inaugural women's 20 km walk, the triumphant survivor after three walkers ahead of her



ANDY LYONS/ALLSPORT

had reached the lead – and then been disqualified. The last was Australia's Jane Saville, who was removed from the course literally in the shadows of the Stadium.

Jumping for Joy

The men's long jump final was the end of a long haul for Ivan Pedroso of Cuba. He fouled half his jumps – and then sobbed with joy as he won gold with the final jump of the event. Second was the casual Jai Taurima of Australia, who jumped to a new status as a folk hero in his country.

More Surprises

For Greece

Konstantinos Kenteris of Greece was the surprise winner in the men's 200 m. The medal was Greece's first men's track medal, and Kenteris' time of 20.09 seconds was a national record.

For Belarus

The women's shot put event also produced a surprise result. Yanina Korolchik, winning for Belarus with her last throw, had a triple victory. She had passed her personal best and defeated both the pre-Games favourite, and the reigning Olympic champion and three-time world champion.

For Estonia

The unheralded Erki Nool of Estonia took the gold in decathlon, his first ever major championship win. Nool's discus throws were originally ruled ineligible, and then were reinstated. He then ran a magnificent 1500 m, to overtake Chris Huffins of the USA.

At Their Best

Second Gold for Jones

Controversy had dogged sprint queen Marion Jones of the USA since news of her shot putter husband's failure to pass four drug tests for a steroid. On Day 13, however, her focus on the track was complete. She won the 200 m, her second gold at these Games. Sri Lanka's Susanthika Jayasinghe won bronze, and the whole of her home country came to a standstill in delight at her achievement. Jayasinghe had won the country's second ever Olympic medal, after a drought of 52 years.

Paralympic Sports Demonstration

Two demonstration events of Paralympic sports were featured on Day 13 – the 800 m women's wheelchair race and the 1500 m men's race. Louise Sauvage of Australia won gold in the 800 m, and Saul Mendoza of Mexico the 1500 m. A stadium crowd of 106 000 and billions of television viewers saw Paralympic sport at its elite level best.

The Best Games Ever

On Day 13, the wheels of the Sydney 2000 Games continued to turn smoothly. Use of public transport continued to flourish. In fact, a car park company with nine city-centre car parks complained that use of its car parks had dropped considerably during the Games. The company attributed this to the perception that it was illegal to bring a car into the city during the Games, and to the Games organisers' campaign to promote



8

KAI PFAFFENBACH/REUTERS

the use of public transport. Taxi drivers also complained of a severe dip in business. The combination of abundant, efficient public transport and government fleets to pick up members of the Olympic Family at hotels meant there was far less need for their services than usual – in a city far more populated than usual.

It was on this day that IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch affirmed the excellence of the Sydney 2000 Games. If the Games closed that very day, he said, the Sydney 2000 Games would still be the best Games ever. He affirmed too the importance of the volunteers, saying that they, together with the athletes, had been the most important aspect of the Games.

The infrastructure of the Sydney 2000 Games was working effectively, and evoking great satisfaction from executive committees, athletes and spectators alike. But it was the spirit of these Games - concern for others' rights, and mutual understanding - that made the Sydney 2000 Games the best.

Day 13

Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day
13

8. The Norwegian women's soccer team performs a wave on the podium after defeating the United States in the gold medal match

9. Twenty-eight km away from the Olympic epicentre at Sydney Olympic Park, Otto Becker of Germany on Cento jumps his way to gold in the team show jumping event at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre

10. Marion Jones, American sprint queen, chats to fans after winning her second gold in the 200 m

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DARREN ENGLAND/ALLSPORT

10

LIONEL CIRONNEAU/AP PHOTO



Day 14

DAY 14 – FRIDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

The Opening Ceremony flowed from start to finish with almost no hitches. Dancers found their places and passed flawlessly from one movement to the next; scene followed smoothly upon scene.

And so it was during the Games, where event succeeded event with impressive ease. It was good planning that ensured success and order, and the safety and security of the thousands and thousands who visited the sporting venues and the city centre daily.

The 16 days of the Olympic Games in Sydney saw more people in the city than ever before. A large-crowd situation can often carry dangers, but the aim of this crowd was enjoyment, and its pursuits were by and large leisurely. Peace reigned. Picnics were the order of the day at Belmore Park opposite Central Station as jazz groups played. Families visited Circular Quay to enjoy the non-stop entertainment. There were aerial acts and buskers, and the Rocks area nearby was pulsing with people having a day out. The city's residents and visitors were experiencing the Olympic Games as a non-stop show, performed for their benefit.

By Day 14 the Sydney 2000 Games was almost over. It was very clear by this time that the security strategy of low-key presence and faultless cover of crowds, visitors and athletes had worked well. Although Australia's Federal Government had given itself emergency powers to cope with any crisis along the lines of the bombing in Atlanta's Olympic Park, happily these didn't have to be exercised during the Sydney 2000 Games. Moreover, the security team worked very hard to respect citizens' rights. Critics of the Games had feared that special state legislation, giving increased powers to take action on illegal marketing and to control crowds, could be used on the homeless in the city and on protesters. This did not occur. "Those are not our issues," said police spokesperson Peter Mihaly. "Neither homelessness nor protest marching are an offence, and both have continued during the Games."

Whether it was the security or the generous, trusting spirit of the people in the Olympic City, reported crime fell by 20 per cent across New South Wales during the Games. At the Live Sites there was only one significant incident, involving aggressive behaviour and broken glass during the late-night entertainment at Martin Place. This form of entertainment was stopped, and there was no repeat of the incident.

Sydney was offering its visitors a continuous spectacle against a backdrop of peace and amity. The city had won over its visitors completely, the Games sold both Sydney and Australia to the world. Many athletes who had originally intended leaving

Australia when their events were over changed their travel plans and tickets, and went on to see more of the host country.

Another achievement of the Sydney 2000 Games was the smoothness and unobtrusiveness with which logistics and operations were managed. It had taken years of planning to pull off a month of outstanding performances. Throughout the Games, a huge volume of goods and services – from beds, linen, laundry and housekeeping, food and furniture to temporary seating, fencing and flags – had to be delivered to venues. Equipment had to be installed, maintained and taken down, and staff had to be instructed and supervised. Venues were often reconfigured several times in as many days. The SuperDome, for example, was used for artistic gymnastics, basketball and trampoline, and as a holding area for athletes and the site of a post-Games party. Sydney Olympic Park was the site of 11 competition venues, used by 15 sports. Between midnight and dawn every day, as many as 350 semi-trailers were dispatched to deliver 2500 tonnes of goods to over 50 receiving terminals throughout the Park.

The operations were coordinated at the Olympic Logistics Centre, located near Sydney Olympic Park, where materials were stored and used as needed. Given the importance of the Logistics Centre to the success of the Games, security here was tighter than anywhere else. Before the Games began, it was already holding more than A\$80 million worth of goods.



TONY LEWIS/ALLSPORT

Day 14

Volume Two
Chapter Three

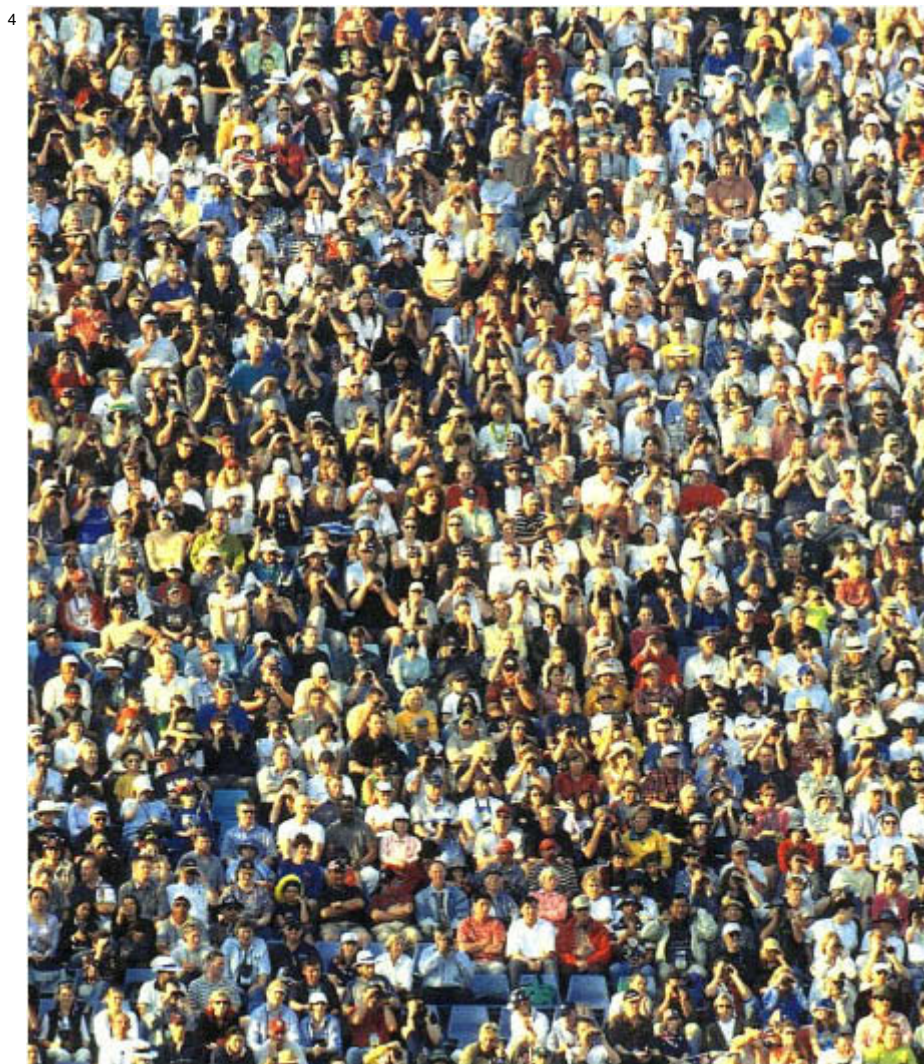
Day 14



2

JASON SOUTH/THE AGE

1. Olympic and Paralympic figures were affixed on Sydney's Centre point Tower in celebration of the 27th Olympiad
2. Evidence of the Games could be seen throughout the city and reached all walks of life
3. Spectator Services volunteers were the ever-friendly and helpful face of the Sydney Games



MIKE BLAKE/REUTERS

As the Closing Ceremony approached, staff began completing their preparations for the post-Games wind up. The Remains of the Games team, from the SOCOG Procurement Division, was responsible for the sale of equipment by public auction. The on-line auction was designed to sell off virtually everything used in the Games, from the Ned Kelly mechanical horse from the Opening Ceremony to the washing machines in the Olympic Village. Special arrangements were made to create a documentary and reliable archive of the Games, and to distribute athletics equipment to sporting organisations across Australia.

Sporting Surprises

Day 14 was a great day for outsiders and small countries in the athletics competitions at the Olympic Stadium.

Long-term Record Falls

In the biggest upset of the Sydney 2000 Games, Kenya's Noah Ngeny edged past world record holder Hicham El Guerrouj of Morocco in the final 40 m to win the 1500 m run in 3:32.07, and break Sebastian Coe's 16-year-old Olympic record. El Guerrouj had been unbeaten at the distance since he fell and finished last at the Atlanta Games. He was considered invincible. But the tremendous pressure of the Sydney event enervated him, and he slowed down in the second lap. After the race, the winner said, "I have not beaten Hicham. I can only say that I won the Olympic Games."

Steeplechase Victory

Another world record holder, Kenya's Bernard Barmasai, faded to fourth in the 3000 m steeplechase, but a countryman captured gold all the same. Reuben Kosgei emerged triumphant from a ferocious five-man sprint down the final straight to extend Kenya's string of victories in this event to five.

Longjump to Germany

Another favourite to experience disappointment was sprint queen Marion Jones, who had hoped to win the women's long jump en route to a record five gold medals. Veteran Heike Drechsler of Germany put an end to those hopes. The 35-year-old Drechsler, who first won Olympic medals for the former German Democratic Republic in the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul and who had won the long jump in Barcelona, found the solution to the Olympic Stadium's difficult swirling winds. Her winning leap of 6.99 m was her best jump of the season.

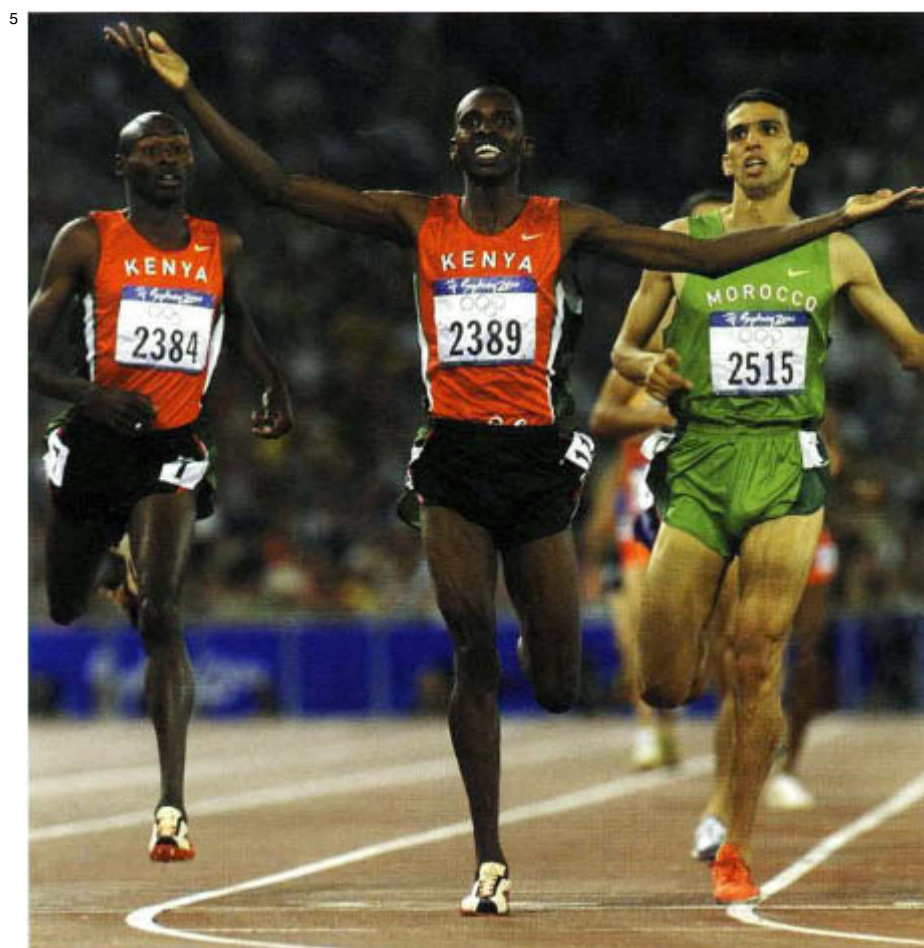
Tight Finish for Pole Vault

In still another athletics surprise, Nick Hysong of the USA achieved the best performance of his life when it mattered the most, and won the Olympic gold medal in the pole vault. Four vaulters made the winning height, 5.90 m, so the final placings were determined on the 'fewest misses' rule.

Other Magic Moments

Two Golden Walks for Poland

A defending Olympic champion and a teenager made it a special day for Poland. Robert Korzeniowski retained the 50 km walk title he had won in Atlanta. In doing so, he became the first man in Olympic history to win both men's



DOUG MILLS/AP PHOTO

4. Sold-out stands at the Olympic Stadium were an impressive backdrop for the track and field competition

5. In a heart-stopping finish in the men's 1500 m final Kenya's Noah Ngeny (centre) beats favourite Hicham El Guerrouj of Morocco

6



PALANI MOHANFAIRFAX

walking events at the same Olympic Games, having won the 20 km race earlier in the week when Mexican walker Bernardo Segura was disqualified after crossing the finish line in first place.

Taekwondo Excitement

In the men's under 80 kg taekwondo class, Cuban Angel Valodia Matos Fuentes defeated Faissal Ebnoutalib of Germany 3–1 in the gold medal match in a spectacular contest of near-misses and strategy. But the first Olympic taekwondo competition continued to be marred by controversy. On Day 14, Danish welterweight Muhammed Dahmani was the latest addition to the ranks of disgruntled athletes to refuse to leave the mat after his competition, in protest against what he considered biased refereeing.

Courage Applauded

The Olympic distance events provide poignant moments of triumph for everyone who finishes. In the week before the

50 km walk, British walker Chris Maddocks had re-injured his hamstring, but vowed to compete anyway and complete his fifth consecutive Olympic race. When the grey-haired 43-year-old athlete entered the stadium, 39th and the last man to finish, a resounding roar from the crowd greeted him. "It was the most emotional thing I've ever seen," Maddocks said afterwards. "People all along the course – the policemen, the stewards, people from all nationalities – were giving me amazing support."

Three Out of Four for Hockeyroos

The home town crowd rejoiced as Australia's Hockeyroos had a convincing win in the gold medal women's hockey match over Argentina. It gave the Hockeyroos their third title in four consecutive Olympic Games. They had won in Seoul and Atlanta, but finished fifth in Barcelona. Rechelle Hawkes, the player who took the athletes' oath at the Opening Ceremony, was a member of all three gold medal teams.

Synchronized Gold

In the synchronized swimming team event, the reigning world champions from the Russian Federation won gold, and Japan silver. While judging in the sport has often come in for criticism, everyone was well satisfied with the way it was conducted in Sydney. The Canadians said it was the best ever at a major championship.

With two days to go, sports continued to thrill and surprise while the less spectacular elements – security, transport, goodwill imbued crowds – were keeping the giant Olympic Games audience in Sydney thoroughly satisfied with the Games.

Day 14

Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day 14

6. The last day of competition in the synchronized swimming brought the silver medal for a smiling Japanese team
7. The men's volleyball semifinal ended with disappointment for the Italian players, who had to concede victory to Yugoslavia
8. The Olympic city continues to glow and enchant

3



WAYNE TAYLORFAIRFAX

8



DONALD MIRALLE/ALLSPORT



Now racing in front of
the Opera House -
Open Soling

olympic
arts
festival



DAY 15 – SATURDAY 30 SEPTEMBER

At the Opening Ceremony, different disciplines – instrumental music, singing, dance, horse riding and acrobatics – were interwoven to create an overall spectacle, like a victor's wreath formed from strips of the most varied and precious of metals.

This unity of disciplines characterised the whole of the Sydney 2000 Games, which echoed the multiple facets of the ancient Games.

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Games reflected the glory days of the ancient Olympic Games in classical Greece, which attracted not only athletes and spectators from every corner of the known world, but also the leading artists, politicians, merchants and traders of the day. After the day's events were concluded, theatre companies and choral groups would stage performances. Poets and sculptors sought commissions from the newly crowned champions, merchants sold their wares, and diplomats, under the neutrality of the Olympic truce, conducted negotiations with their counterparts from rival city states. It was no doubt this vibrant, festive character of the ancient Olympic Games that led Baron Pierre de Coubertin to insist that his modern Games should have similar cultural components. His view was that Olympism should be seen as a philosophy of life, a blend of culture, education and sport, encouraging the establishment of a peaceful society.

Baron de Coubertin would have been pleased with the ambitious Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival, which concluded on Day 15. The festival extended over four years, with a six-week gala planned for the time of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival had begun with a day-long indigenous welcoming ceremony, *Tubowgule* or *The Meeting of the Waters*, at three sites of significance to indigenous people – La Perouse, the site of early contact between Australia's indigenous people and the European explorers, the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney, and the Sydney Opera House. During the weeks that followed, more than 4000 artists from Australia and around the world took part in the festival, and thousands of Olympic visitors and Sydneysiders experienced their work in exhibitions, displays and performances.

Two of the most striking events of the festival explored the conditions and values that gave birth to the Olympic Games in classical Greece. At the Powerhouse Museum, the exhibition '1000 Years of the Olympic Games' depicted the cult of masculinity among the athletes of antiquity as they competed in events such as boxing, bull-leaping and chariot racing. These sports were depicted in exquisitely crafted marble sculptural reliefs, marble and bronze statues, and ceramic

vessels on loan from the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. Visitors to the exhibition could also take a 'virtual reality' tour of the sacred site and the stadium at Olympia.

At the Sydney Opera House, Michael Bogdanov directed the Bell Shakespeare Company in a brilliantly innovative version of *Troilus and Cressida*, Shakespeare's biting account of the Trojan War. It is Homer's account of this war in the *Iliad* that gives us the first recorded description of an athletic competition, the funeral games held by Achilles to honour his fallen friend Patroclus. The events leading up to the historic competition are portrayed in Shakespeare's play.

Both exhibition and play explored the tensions and contradictions between the chivalrous aspirations of the athletes and their competitiveness. While the conditions of the ancient world were very different from those of today, these Festival events suggested powerfully that the parallels between ancient and modern Olympic sport are very close.

Like the Opening Ceremony, the Festival movingly explored the history, ambitions and achievements of indigenous peoples. Under the collective title 'Skin', two new works premiered at the Sydney Opera House, with the Bangarra Dance Theatre dramatising the challenges facing the indigenous people in contemporary Australia. In *Shelter*, the company depicted women adapting, with warmth and confidence, traditional patterns of nurturing to the hurly-burly of an increasingly urban technological society. The second work, *Spear*, was far more raw and bitter. In it, the male members of the company depicted the Aboriginal man's struggle against racism, alcoholism, and 'white man's education'. Both works contributed significantly to the spirit of intercultural understanding and Reconciliation that surged through the Sydney 2000 Games.

Day 15

Volume Two
Chapter Three



2

GREG BARRETT/OLYMPIC ARTS FESTIVAL

1. Tainu artists perform in a free open air event at the Sydney Opera House. The Olympic Arts Festival offered a variety of shows, concerts and exhibitions throughout a six-week period
2. Hunter Page Lochard and Djakapurra Munyarryun from the Bangarra Dance Theatre perform in *Skin*, a powerful piece reflecting on issues in Aboriginal communities
3. Cloud Gate, a Taiwanese dance ensemble, perform their daily routine of Tai Chi in Centennial Park



MICHAEL RAYNER/SCOGG

Day 15
Volume Two
Chapter Three



4. Despite a supportive home crowd, Lauren Jackson, Sandy Brondello and Annie la Fleur (left to right) of the Australian Opals watch from the bench as the US women's basketball team celebrates their gold medal
5. A security officer keeps and eye on the crowds during the football final at the Olympic Stadium
6. After defeating Spain in the men's soccer final, Cameroon's forward Patrick Mboma can celebrate his country's first gold medal in Olympic history

In addition to the Arts Festival offerings, the Live Sites continued to provide entertainment, swarming with people attending these free performances. On Day 15, 40 000 people listened to a jazz concert by James Morrison in the Domain, while watching the Australia-USA women's basketball game on a giant screen.

After almost a week without a hitch, Olympic transportation was briefly derailed on Day 15 – literally – when a train left the tracks at the Flemington maintenance yards, delaying spectator trains from the city to Sydney Olympic Park. No one was hurt, and the system was back in full operation within 20 minutes.

Special Sporting Achievements

First Ever Gold

The Bahamas upset the USA on the track in the 4 x 100 m women's relay, ending a winning streak that stretched back to Los Angeles in 1984. It was the first gold medal in Olympic history for the small island nation. Jamaica won silver, giving anchor Merlene Ottey her eighth Olympic medal – the most held by any female track and field athlete. The US team, anchored by Marion Jones, won bronze.

Gold Number Three

In road cycling, Leontien Zijlaard of the Netherlands won the 31.2 km women's individual time trial to claim her third gold medal of the Sydney 2000 Games. Zijlaard's medal tally of three golds and one silver equalled that of fellow Netherlander, swimmer Inge de Bruijn.

Three in a Row

Cuba staged a thrilling comeback in women's volleyball to defeat the Russian Federation and win a third consecutive Olympic title. Both teams began with uncharacteristic errors, but Cuba was quicker to recover. And in boxing, Cuba's Felix Savon won his third successive Olympic heavyweight 91 kg gold medal. He used his long reach and powerful right



MARK DUNCAN/AP PHOTO

glove to dominate the match against the Russian Federation's Sultanahmed Ibzagicimov.

Gold Number Six

In the women's kayak K4 500 m sprint on the Olympic rowing course at Penrith Lakes, Germany successfully defended its 1996 Olympic gold medal by defeating the reigning world champions from Hungary. The German win gave Birgit Fischer her sixth gold medal, making her the greatest medal winner in Olympic canoe/kayak history.

Six in a Row

Ethiopian Millon Wolde took gold in the men's 5000 m, the first of six African runners to cross the finish line. After a slow opening pace, Wolde surged past silver medallist Ali Saidi-Sief from Algeria in the last lap.

More Magic Sporting Moments

Back on Track

After the Russian Federation won the Olympic men's handball title in two consecutive Olympic Games, and then lost to Croatia in the 1996 Atlanta Games, they showed that they were back on track by beating world and European champions Sweden 28–26 in the thrilling final match.

Cycling Through the Park

In the final cycling event of the Games, the men's 46.8 km individual time trial, Viacheslav Ekimov of the Russian Federation captured gold ahead of Jan Ullrich of Germany and Lance Armstrong of the USA. Thousands lined the route, many seeing the race as an opportunity to visit Sydney's 360 ha Centennial Park. The park gave spectators shade under its huge trees as they watched the contenders in unseasonable heat.

First Olympic Gold

Cameroon staged a stunning recovery in the men's gold medal football game with Spain, overcoming a two-goal deficit. After 30 minutes of scoreless overtime, the African champions won the shoot-out 5–3. It was Cameroon's first gold medal in any Olympic sport.

Success After 64 Years

Light-flyweight Brahim Asloum became France's first Olympic boxing champion in 64 years when he beat Rafael Lozano Munoz from Spain for gold in the 48 kg event. The unheralded Asloum, who had been boxing for just five years, used his greater height and excellent defence to soak up Lozano's punches and score on the counter-attack.



NATHAN RICHERNEWS LTD



PATRICK HERTZOG/AP

Turning the Tables

For the past four years, the Australian women's basketball team, known as the Opals, had been preparing to meet the USA for the gold medal basketball game. They believed that with the home-court advantage, hard work and a little luck, they would pull off the greatest upset of women's basketball. But the Australians' home-court advantage made the USA the underdogs, which spurred the visiting team to new heights. The USA defeated Australia 76–54, outplaying the Opals in every category, to gain its second straight Olympic title.

Dancing to Victory

At the Olympic Equestrian Centre, Bonfire and his rider Anky van Grunsven from the Netherlands danced their way through the freestyle music to win the individual dressage gold medal.

Going Out in Glory

In men's hockey, the Netherlands and Korea reached a 3–3 tie at the end of regulation time. Then a penalty shoot-out gave the Netherlands the victory, for a second successive Olympic gold.

Gymnastics Out of Rhythm

Controversy marked the rhythmic gymnastics team contest. Scoring often puzzled spectators and led to jeering and whistling. Judging has long been a challenge for this sport. At the 1999 European championships, eight judges were banned from working at the Sydney Olympic Games, and six others received a one-year suspension. In Sydney, a Russian Federation-Belarus tiebreaker was decided by awarding the gold to the team with the higher qualifying mark. Victory went to the Russian Federation.

First in 40 Years

Alexander Leipold won Germany's first Olympic freestyle wrestling gold medal in 40 years with a powerful win over American Brandon Slay in the 76 kg division. Leipold was subsequently disqualified, however.

Falling Out of Contention

The women's 1500 m track final was thrilling to watch. Algerian Nouria Merah-Benida won the race in a dramatic sprint, and Romania's Violeta Szekely finished just 0.05 seconds behind. But for bronze medallist Romanian Gabriela Szabo, finishing just 0.17 seconds behind the winner, it was bitterly disappointing. She started the race with the aim of becoming the first woman to win both the 5000 m and 1500 m at the Olympic Games. Just two laps from the finish she was jostled and fell, landing up 30 m behind the leaders. She charged back, overtaking one after another of the 12 finalists in a powerful sustained sprint. She would leave the Games with the knowledge that, had the race been any longer, she could have passed the leaders.

A Change of Hands

Norwegian world record holder Trine Hattestad won gold in women's javelin, with a brilliant opening throw of 68.91 m. Hattestad was a handball player before taking up the javelin.

Fastest Time by the Fastest Man

In the men's 4 x 100 m relay, the USA regained the championship after their loss to the Canadians in Atlanta.



7

GLEN WATSON/FAIRFAX

Anchored by Maurice Greene, the fastest man in the world, the Americans won in 37.61 seconds – the fastest time of the year. Brazil took silver in a national record time.

USA All the Way

In both the 4 x 400 m relays the USA left its rivals in the dust. Marion Jones ran a sizzling third leg to give her team a commanding victory in the women's race. In the men's relay, Michael Johnson was unchallenged as he crossed the line, victorious in his last Olympic event.

A Man of Many Accomplishments

The Russian Federation's Dmitry Svatkovsky won Olympic gold in the men's modern pentathlon, with a perfectly timed effort in the 3000 m that wrapped up a gruelling day's competition.

As the day ended, fireworks lit the sky from Star City. Day 15 of the Sydney Olympic Games was yet another glorious accumulation of excellence in different areas of endeavour.



8

KATHY WILLENS/AP PHOTO

7. At the Equestrian Centre, crowds enjoy the sun and dressage events

8. The equestrian portion of the modern pentathlon proved too big an obstacle for Bulgaria's Tzanko Hantov who was eliminated after his horse missed two jumps

9. Crowds mill until the early morning hours at Cockle Bay Wharf

9



SYDNEY HARBOUR FORESHORE AUTHORITY





DAY 16 - SUNDAY 1 OCTOBER

The Opening Ceremony combined circles of fire from ancient and modern cultures. The action moved from simple flames for lighting and regenerating the bush to the flame in the Olympic cauldron, a triumph of sophisticated engineering.

Day 16 affirmed the success of the Sydney 2000 Games in its synthesis of natural power and energy with technical brilliance.

The 'Awesome Games'

"I have to borrow a word from my kids I thought I would never use," said a volunteer when asked to describe the Games of the new Millennium that morning. "They've been awesome, simply awesome." He was one of 5000 volunteers who lined up in the early dawn to get a free ticket for the Closing Ceremony. The ticket distribution had been announced the previous evening as a thank you for volunteers, the 'real story of these Games'.

The volunteer's sentiments were widely shared, an overwhelming number wishing that the magic of the Games could continue. They were delighted to hear that a parade would be held a few days later in the city centre to recognise the volunteers' huge contribution to the success of the Games. This parade was to become the largest peacetime parade in Sydney's history.

The Popular Games

The Sydney 2000 Games reached an unprecedentedly large audience. They established new measures for Olympic Games popularity, with 6.7 million tickets sold, or 87 per cent of capacity. On a single day, Friday 22 September, attendance at Sydney Olympic Park totalled 400 345. The Games reached 220 countries through television, and dramatically illustrated the reach of the relatively new medium of the Internet. By the end of the Games, the official website had received 10 billion hits overall.

The Successful Games

The Sydney 2000 Games was more successful than any other Games in the retail area as well. Olympic Games products worth more than A\$420 million were sold between 1997 and the end of the Games.

By Day 16, the city's residents were overwhelmingly positive. In a survey, 95 per cent of Sydney residents said the Games in their city was either 'well organised' or 'Very well organised'. This was an increase of over 50 per cent compared to results in polls conducted before the Games.

It is difficult to establish how many of the 6.7 million tickets bought for events were used by residents of the city, but it is

certain that locals bought many of the tickets sold at later stages during the Games. Sydney got itself to the Games – and was not disappointed. There had been concern about the volume of traffic in the city, and the possible strain on the city's resources, but the Sydney 2000 Games was a triumph for optimism.

The city itself won resounding favour during the Games. Over half of the visitors surveyed said their view of Sydney had changed for the better. Three-quarters said they were likely to return to Sydney. Sydney had displayed its talent at welcoming visitors, seducing them with the beauty of the city, and sending them home impressed by its offerings.

A Flourish to the Ending

The final day of the Olympic Games in Sydney began with a special church service at St Mary's Cathedral in the city, with a choir of 70 creating a moment of quietness and spiritual reflection as the busy times drew to a close. The atmosphere in the Olympic Village and the stadiums had been electrifying and energising, but now the period of frantic activity was drawing to a close. Just 24 medal events remained, to be followed by the Closing Ceremony.

Live entertainment throughout the day gave a flourish to the ending of the Games in the city – jazz at Belmore Park and Martin Place earlier in the day, and Afro, hip-hop, pop and African music later at Darling Harbour. On the Church Street stage in Parramatta, there was an eclectic range of free live entertainment - Indonesian and Latin American groups, groups of children, and a blend of pop, rock, folk and country music.

Sporting Firsts on the Last Day

First Medal Winner

Stephanie Cook of Great Britain, a Scottish-born and English-educated physician, won the first ever gold medal in the women's modern pentathlon.



3

JAMES KNOWLER/NEWSPIX

Day 16
Volume Two
Chapter Three



2

NEWSPIX

1. One of the biggest fireworks displays in Sydney's history lights up the sky above the Opera House
2. Fans secure a spot to view the fireworks at Darling Harbour
3. The excitement builds as the evening of the Closing Ceremony approaches. An estimated 1.5 million people packed the CBD to witness the spectacle

Day 16
Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day
16



ALI JAREK/REUTERS

4. One of the last gold medals awarded went to Alireza Dabir of Iran in the 58 kg freestyle wrestling
5. John Stephen Akwhari of Tanzania, remembered for his courageous performance in the 1968 Olympic marathon, is honoured by the IOC
6. Zeljko Petrovic passes cheering crowds on Bathurst Street on his way to the marathon finish



HAMISH BLAIR/ALLSPORT

First for Canada

Canada won its first ever gold medal in wrestling when the 1999 world champion, Daniel Igali, beat the Russian Federation's Arsen Gitinov in the freestyle 69 kg event.

First for Saudi Arabia

Dutch riders claimed both the gold and silver medals in the individual jumping event at Horsley Park, but Saudi Arabia was also delighted with the results of the event. Khaled Al Eid of Saudi Arabia won bronze on Khashm Al Aan – the first equestrian medal ever for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Magic Moments in Sport

Two in a Row at Sydney

Norway's Knut Holmann won the men's kayak K1 500 m event to collect his second gold medal of the Sydney 2000 Games.

Consecutive Gold

In men's basketball, the USA once again won the gold with an 8–0 record for the competition. However, behind the statistics, there were some very close games that could have gone either way. In a semi-final with Lithuania, the USA won 85–83, with Lithuania having possession at the buzzer. And in the final, where the USA defeated France 85–75, the game often shifted in France's favour, gripping spectators with its tension.

Six-hour Delay

The canoe/kayak competitions were delayed for six hours by high winds. When the competition finally began, Gyorgy Kolonics won gold in the men's canoe C1 500 m event for Hungary. Hungary won another gold medal in the men's C2 canoe 500 m event when Ferenc Novak and Imre Pulai beat the Polish crew of Pawel Baraszkiwicz and Daniel Jedraszko.

Six in a Row

Women's handball ended with a bang. Defending Olympic champions Denmark fought back from a six-goal deficit to defeat Hungary 31–27 to win the gold. Hungary had led for most of the match, until the Danes went on a sensational offensive spree and scored six consecutive goals.

Seven in a Row

Birgit Fischer of Germany won the seventh Olympic gold medal of her career when she and partner Katrin Wagner won the women's kayak K2 500 m race.

Lead of Seven for Seven in a Row

Hungary claimed its seventh men's water polo gold medal in a win over the Russian Federation, 13–6, dominating the match throughout. Yugoslavia beat Atlanta gold medallist Spain to win the bronze.

Inspired – and Rewarded

Boxer Wijan Ponlid dedicated his gold medal for the 51 kg event to the King of Thailand. Yermakhan Ibraimov of Kazakhstan, inspired by a desire to open his own boxing school, won his country's second boxing gold medal by defeating Marin Simion of Romania in the 71 kg event.

A Marathon Ending

In the final event of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, Gezahgne Abera won the men's marathon to complete an almost total Ethiopian domination of the distance events. Eric Wainaina of Kenya won silver, and fellow Ethiopian Tesfaye Tola the bronze. The last athlete to finish was Elias Rodriguez of the Federated States of Micronesia. Both first and last home received a standing ovation from the large, festive crowd. It was hopeful symbolism for the closing of the Games of the new Millennium. At 22 years of age, Abera was the youngest ever winner of the men's marathon, and hailed from one of the world's poorest countries. The tiny Federated States of Micronesia, home of Rodriguez, was making its Olympic debut. Together, first and last runners home heralded two of the strongest messages of these Games: that sport, youth and all the peoples of the world are the heart of the Olympic Movement.

And a Marathon Success

The success of the marathon was also a symbol of the success of the Sydney 2000 Games. This had been an Olympic Games of outstanding athletic and cultural performances, moving personal and community dramas, superb organisation, for the most part miraculous weather, and a festive, friendly spirit. They had shown Australia and the world how sport and culture can bring together people with diverse backgrounds, allowing them to learn from each other in peaceful competition and exchange. And Sydney, when it played host to the Olympic Games, did so with gusto, dedication and infinite care.

Despite all the successes, the prevalence of performance enhancing drugs in the sporting world continued to shadow the Sydney 2000 Games. On Day 16, three more athletes were disciplined for positive tests, bringing to 35 the total of athletes caught in out-of-competition and Games testing. Many saw the stepped-up testing at Sydney as a positive force



MICHAEL DODGE/NEWS LTD



- one athletics commentator suggested that the fact there was not a single world record set in athletics meant all the medals were 'clean'. It was also clear, as the *Sydney Morning Herald* noted in an editorial, that the success of the Games, the increased vigour of drug testing and the reform of the IOC, would probably not have happened without the constant critical scrutiny of the Australian and international media. In these respects the Sydney 2000 Games represented an important step forward.

In the public spectacles, the athletics and cultural events, and in the behind-the-scenes organisational tasks, the 2000 Olympic Games powerfully affirmed the energy and ambition of the host country. Australian athletes from every region of the country and every background - indigenous, descendants of the First and Second Fleets, and more recent immigrants - had represented the green and gold with flair and courage, while the largely Australian crowds had cheered them on with a deafening roar.

Skilled organisation was a particular feature of the Sydney 2000 Games. The Games brought together more athletes, coaches, officials, artists, journalists and spectators than ever before, all demanding and receiving a higher than ever standard of professionalism in the venues and preparations. The facilities were often described as the best the world had ever seen. Forward planning had been meticulous. It became clear that Australia had found the winning combination: careful planning, research, staff training, innovative use of technology, the dedication of thousands of professional staff and volunteers, and the goodwill of thousands of others.

For the Olympic Movement too, Sydney 2000 was a great success, a welcome affirmation of idealism and popularity after the IOC's recent history of doubt and disillusionment. The Sydney Olympic Games represented another giant step for gender equity as women competed in record numbers in a record number of sports and events, and produced many of the most exciting performances of the Games before an enormous audience. The Sydney 2000 Games also gave women an all too rare opportunity to showcase their abilities and achievements to those parts of the world where male only professional competitions usually dominate the sporting mass media. Cathy Freeman, Marion Jones, Inge de Bruijn, Naoko Takahashi and their sister athletes were heroes in Sydney, giving legitimacy to the claims of women everywhere for a just distribution of social resources and benefits.

The Sydney 2000 Games powerfully affirmed the Olympic Movement's internationalism, although the vociferousness of the loyal Australian home-crowd media and fans sometimes made this difficult to see. Outside the United Nations General Assembly, no other event gives every national community, regardless of size or importance, the opportunity to present itself to the world on the same basis. The Opening Ceremony welcomed a record 200 NOCs before a worldwide television audience and gave impetus to the aspirations of the Koreans for national unity and of the East Timorese to independence.

In the sporting competitions, a record 80 countries won medals, six for the very first time. The dramatic victories of Colombian Maria Isabel Urrutia in weightlifting, Wijan Ponlid of Thailand in boxing, Olga Shishigina of Kazakhstan in the 100 m hurdles and Cameroon in football reminded the world that developing countries have a powerful contribution to make to Olympic sport. The importance of assisting those from disadvantaged countries and regions was shown in the successful efforts of Olympic Solidarity and Olympic Aid.

In the opinion of *The Guardian*, "possibly the best Olympic Games there ever could be".

The Sydney 2000 Games had begun with the power of nature, the ring of horse-riders at the Opening Ceremony. The Closing Ceremony ended with the rings of the Harbour Bridge on fire, a complex technical achievement. The circle was complete, affirming the variety and vibrancy of the culture of Australia and especially that of Sydney, home to the first Olympic Games of the new Millennium.

Day 16
Volume Two
Chapter Three

Day
16

7. Fans are in party mood at Martin Place
8. The first signs of friendship between the two Koreas will be remembered from the Sydney Games. Bong-Sub Kim (left), Deputy Chef de Mission and Sang-Chul Lee, Chef de Mission, show the flag which united the two Korean teams
9. The Pyrmont Live Site bursts with people gathered to watch the closing ceremony on the big screen



GRAHAM EDWARDS/CITY OF SYDNEY ARCHIVES





CLOSING CEREMONY

Olympic Stadium

1 October 2000

Olympic Closing Ceremonies have never been the same since Melbourne's Games in 1956. Until then the athletes marched formally in national groups, much as they do in the Opening Ceremonies. The person responsible for the change was John Ian Wing, a Chinese-Australian apprentice carpenter, aged 17, who wrote to the Organising Committee suggesting that athletes from all nations should mingle in the Closing Ceremony – not marching, but strolling and waving. The result was the most spontaneously joyful Closing Ceremony the Olympic Movement had then known. It certainly contributed to the Melbourne Olympic Games' undying reputation as the Friendly Games.

It was appropriate, then, that tribute was paid to John Ian Wing in both the prelude to Sydney 2000's Closing Ceremony and the entrance of the athletes. Forty-four years had passed, and these were the first Olympic Games he had ever attended. In Melbourne in 1956, he had watched a television set in the window of a city store. He was introduced via a giant television screen, and his original letter was reproduced in the official program.

This Closing Ceremony included solemn formalities, a rocking, bopping parade of athletes that made Melbourne's 1956 version look positively staid, and an uproarious farewell party that celebrated and often mocked aspects of Australian popular culture. The prevailing mood of fond irreverence was signalled by the issue of eskies, portable foam iceboxes, to all 110 000 members of the capacity crowd. These contained essential Australian backyard barbecue equipment like fly-swats, and when they were held aloft on cue around the arena they gave a distinctively Australian flavour to the Mexican wave. The IOC President, His Excellency Juan Antonio Samaranch, reflected the spirit of the whole affair when, during his formal speech, he said, "What can I say? Maybe, with my Spanish accent, Aussie! Aussie! Aussie!" The response to these first words of a familiar chant came from all around the stadium, "Oi! Oi! Oi!"

The intention of the directors was to conduct the ceremony with a certain dignity until the extinction of the Olympic flame, and then to unleash a party. "The athletes have finished competition, and are ready to party, and we have set about creating a party to end all parties," explained the creative director, David Atkins. "We have decided to invite everyone into our giant Australian backyard – fully equipped with Hills Hoists, barbecues, an eclectic mix of music, performers and all manner of Australiana. Australians have a tradition of throwing great parties, and this one will be imbued with a sense of fun, larrikinism and goodwill."

In fact the dignity had to wait. The program began with a lawnmower chase that evoked echoes of the Keystone Cops. An 'out-of-control' lawnmower ploughed through a stage on which a pretend dignitary was about to make a speech, then broke up a marching band. As it careered around the arena, off it, through tunnels around it, then back onto the arena, it was pursued by an ever-growing crowd. When it was finally trapped and broken up, its driver picked himself up and fled from the arena clutching the steering equipment that had caused so much havoc.

A fanfare from 48 trumpeters positioned at both ends of the stadium brought a more organised atmosphere to proceedings. Then came a glorious rendition by the Torres Strait Islander Christine Anu of 'Island Home' – a song whose mood is both proud and defiant. She was accompanied by 37 Island dancers, and the visual imagery of hundreds of umbrellas being rotated around a giant revolving globe.

The entry of flagbearers from all 199 competing nations followed, with Greece in its traditional first place. Ian Thorpe, winner of three gold medals, carried the flag of the host country, along with other successful athletes such as Steven

Closing Ceremony

Volume Two

Chapter Three



1. Giant Kewpie dolls, accompanied by ballroom dancers, parade through the arena

2. Athletes, stars of the past 16 days, gather on the infield for the last big celebration of the Games



2

ROBERT GIANFLORE/ALLSPORT

Closing Ceremony

Volume Two
Chapter Three



Redgrave (Great Britain), Inge de Bruijn (Netherlands), Simon Whitfield (Canada), Brigitte McMahon (Switzerland), Derartu Tulu (Ethiopia), Nouria Merah-Benida (Algeria) and Jan Zelezny (Czech Republic). Next came an invasion by 3500 athletes, who spilled onto the arena from all sides, running, dancing, waving – all utterly joyful. If ever testimony were needed of the significance of John Ian Wing's ideas about informality, their spirit provided it.

As the athletes continued to mill about the midfield, shouting and dancing, the rock group Savage Garden began to perform their hit song 'Affirmation', composed by the duo Darren Hayes and Daniel Jones. Then suddenly the mood changed, as the Greek and Australian flags were raised in turn. As the Greek banner glided up the flagpole, the Greek national anthem, 'I Shall Always Know You', was sung by the 100 members of the Millennium Children's Choir of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia. The Australian anthem, 'Advance Australia Fair', was performed by the 108-strong Sing 2001 Children's Choir as the Australian flag was raised.

In his official speech, the President of SOCOG, Minister Knight, thanked all athletes and told them, "You have given us the time of our lives, and left us with memories to last a lifetime." Juan

Antonio Samaranch, who was attending his last Olympic Games as President of the IOC, recalled that seven years earlier he had uttered the words "And the winner is ... Sydney", and told the audience, "To you, all the people of Sydney and Australia, these have been your Games. And to you, our friends from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, you have helped to write a glorious chapter in the history of Australia."

After expressing gratitude to athletes, volunteers, media and sponsors, he concluded, "The Sydney 2000 Games ... showed that, with the support of the United Nations, the Olympic Truce can be a reality, as demonstrated by the historic joint parade of the two Korean delegations at the Opening Ceremony of these Games. These are my last Games as President of the International Olympic Committee. They could not have been better. Therefore, I am proud and happy to proclaim that you have presented to the world the best Olympic Games ever... Thank you, Sydney. Thank you, New South Wales. Thank you, Australia. You made it!"

President Samaranch presented the IOC's Olympic Order in Gold to Minister Knight "as an expression of gratitude for a perfect organisation", and to John Coates, President of the Australian Olympic Committee, "for fulfilling the promise of these being the Athletes' Games". He announced that the IOC's Olympic Cup would go to the people of Sydney.

President Samaranch introduced seven of the eight athletes who had been elected to join the IOC by competitors at the Sydney Games. They were Susan O'Neill (swimming, Australia); Alexander Popov (swimming, Russian Federation); Sergei Bubka (athletics, Russian Federation); Jan Zelezny (athletics, Czech Republic); Charmaine Crooks (athletics, Canada); Robert Ctvrtlik (volleyball, USA) and Manuel Estiarte (water polo, Spain). The absentee was Roland Barr (rowing, Germany).

For the handover of the ceremonial Olympic flag, the Mayor of Athens, Dimitris L. Avramopoulos, and the President of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games Organising Committee, Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki, went to the stage. They were joined by a procession of 21 priestesses led by the chief priestess, Thalia Prokopiou. The chief priestess, in real life a graduate theatre student at the University of Athens, had lit the flame of the Sydney Games in Olympia on May 10. The priestesses, mainly drama students and dancers, all carried sprigs of olive leaves as they performed a series of solemn, stately tableaux designed by the veteran choreographer Maria Horss. The Greek composer and performer, Vangelis, directed and composed the music for this segment.

Then the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Frank Sartor, walked to the stage with the flag, waved it to the crowd, and handed it to President Samaranch, who passed it on to the Mayor of Athens. As the Greek party carried the flag across the arena, an illuminated sign read: 'Welcome Home, Olympic Games, Athens 2004'. President Samaranch then declared the Games of the XXVII Olympiad to be closed, to an audible sigh from the crowd, and made the traditional call to the youth of the world to assemble again in four years – this time in Athens. The Games are returning to the country of their birth.



3. IOC President Samaranch proclaims Sydney's Games the "best Games ever"

4. Savage Garden perform their hit song Affirmation

As the Olympic flag that had flown above the stadium for 16 days of competition was lowered, the distinguished soprano Yvonne Kenny sang the Olympic anthem. The eight young Australian athletes given the task of escorting the flag from the arena had been chosen to symbolise the future of sport. One of them was Lori Munz, a double gold medallist at the 1998 Commonwealth Games, who had been deprived of her opportunity to swim at the Sydney Games when both her knees were badly damaged in a car accident. The others, all winners of world junior championships, were Melissa Rippon (water polo), Anna McIlwaine (diving), Matthew Belcher (sailing), Neil Dennis (rowing), Stefan Szscurowski (rowing), Kerrie Meares (cycling) and Mark Renshaw (cycling).

The last performance before the extinction of the Olympic flame came from Nikki Webster, the Hero Girl of the Opening Ceremony. High on a platform beneath the cauldron, she sang 'We'll be One', accompanied by the two children's choirs that had sung during the raising of the Greek and Australian flags. It was a wonderful moment that provided a symbolic link between the Opening Ceremony, the Closing Ceremony and the future. The flame, kindled in Greece, borne through that nation, then throughout the countries of Oceania and finally around Australia, dimmed, then vanished as she finished. At that moment an F-111 aircraft of the Royal Australian Air Force thundered overhead, barely 160 metres above the cauldron. As it did so, a plume of flame from its afterburner suddenly lit up the night sky. It was as if the Olympic flame had been snatched and carried away into the darkness. There was another huge sigh, maybe of awe, maybe of sadness. The 2000 Olympic Games that had cast a spell over Sydney, and all of Australia, was over, and the traditional part of the Closing



5

Closing Ceremony

Volume Two
Chapter Three

NICK WILSON/SPORT

Ceremony had concluded. But the less formal part of the celebrations continued in a uniquely Antipodean style as the party erupted into life.

It was vibrant, brash, funny and laced with kitsch, but the thematic undertone of Reconciliation that had permeated the Opening Ceremony was still there. It was there in the Aboriginal flags and 'sorry' statements that adorned the clothing of some of the entertainers, but it was asserted most in message songs by the groups Yothu Yindi and Midnight Oil.

Yothu Yindi, an Aboriginal band from Arnhem Land, presented a dynamic reworking of their 1991 song, 'Treaty', which said in part:

*Words are easy, words are cheap,
Much cheaper than our priceless land,
All your promises have been broken,
Just like writing in the sand.*



6

5. Nikki Webster, star of the opening ceremony, is lifted up to the Olympic cauldron to sing 'We'll be One' as the flame is slowly extinguished
6. The Olympic flag is formally handed over to the Mayor of Athens, Dimitris L. Avampopoulos and Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki, President of the organising committee for the 2004 Olympic Games

HAMISH BLAIR/SPORT

Closing Ceremony
Volume Two
Chapter Three



1



KIMMASA MAYAMA/REUTERS

Midnight Oil's rendition of 'Beds are Burning', sung by their imposing lead singer Peter Garrett, had as its chorus:

*The time has come, to say fair's fair,
To pay the rent, to pay our share.
The time has come, a fact's a fact,
It belongs to them, let's give it back.*

Stilt-walkers bearing Hills Hoists, umbrella-shaped backyard clothes lines, pranced around the stadium as Vanessa Amorosi, descending in a chrome and metallic cage from 30 m above the stage, sang her hit song 'Absolutely Everybody' to a Latin beat in a futuristic production. Then suddenly the arena was transformed into the biggest dance-floor in the world as 960 couples in fluorescent costumes whirled through laps of samba, tango and sheer jive to the beat of John Paul Young singing 'Love is in the Air'. They were accompanied by 208 giant dancing feet and an incongruous assembly of 12 oversized kewpie dolls, while in mid-field the athletes picked up the beat in a huge conga line.

Throughout a segment called Heroes, which featured the guitarists Tommy and Phil Emmanuel, the group INXS and the rock singer Jimmy Barnes as well as Yothu Yindi and Midnight Oil, a bizarre array of inflatable creatures floated above and around the arena. These were designed by the artist-musician Reg Mombassa, who explained that his aim was "to create raucous, amusing and absurdist images of Australian icons and flora and fauna".

Allowing for a certain looseness in the definition of 'icon', then and throughout much of the Closing Ceremony, he certainly managed to do that. Among the more outlandish blow-up creations was a 'McKangaroo' which seemed to have escaped

from a monster movie, carrying the Harbour Bridge in one hand and a fighter plane in the other. It had as company a 'beer monster', a representation of the worst kind of beer-swilling Australian tourist, and an 'Australian Jesus', a friendly overweight carpenter from the Hunter Valley of New South Wales, wearing a grey suit and red cloak.

It was in the next segment, titled Parade of Icons, that the directors and their team really prodded at the boundaries of irreverent, unapologetic kitsch. Australian pop diva Kylie Minogue, who played the adult incarnation of the Opening Ceremony's Hero Girl, was hauled from a tunnel by 100 lifesavers carrying a very large version of a surf-lifesaving reel. She was travelling on an enormous rubber thong – footwear of a kind much favoured on Australian beaches – and wearing a grown-up version of the sundress worn by Nikki Webster early in the Opening Ceremony. Minogue, an indefatigable performer who has been in the spotlight since she was a young child, camped it up aboard her thong with the ABBA tune, 'Dancing Queen'.

Another icon, the golfer Greg Norman, known throughout the world as the Great White Shark, joined the parade inside a huge shark followed by a retinue of 12 fins, which turned out to be caddies. Norman emerged in front of his conveyance's dorsal fin, stepped onto a perfectly groomed putting-green on the beast's back, and teed off into a grandstand crowd. The accompanying music was from the theme to the movie *Jaws*.

The supermodel Elle McPherson arrived for this parade aboard a large camera with a telescopic lens, flanked by 20 female models and 12 photographers. The actor Paul Hogan made his entrance atop a giant *Crocodile Dundee* hat, surrounded

8



SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT

7. Kylie Minogue performs Abba's Dancing Queen
8. Australian athletes enjoy the music, partying on the infield

9



SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT

by crocodiles on skates, prawns on bicycles, water buffalo on scooters and lizards on unicycles. The Bananas in Pyjamas duo, stars of a television program that is watched by an estimated 100 million young children around the world, came in aboard a huge banana, with three bears and a rat. The last icon, based on the Australian film *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, took the form of 62 drag queens, some of whom rode designer-shoe bicycles.

This unlikely congregation of pop cultural symbols was joined on-field by all the stars of the Closing Ceremony, as

the group Men at Work, fronted by Colin Hayes, produced a lusty version of their alternative anthem 'Land Down Under'. This was followed promptly by country music legend Slim Dusty's rendition of 'Waltzing Matilda', a sad ballad that could never be termed 'alternative', but is regarded by many Australians as the unofficial national anthem.

Finally, to the strains of Wagner and Mahler, came an enormous fireworks display that moved from the stadium and 14 km down the Parramatta River to Sydney Harbour, where the Harbour Bridge exploded for 20 minutes in a dazzling celebration of gold, silver and bronze fireworks. The audience in the stadium watched its progress on the giant screens. When it was all over, people began to drift away. The cauldron above was dark. The Sydney 2000 Games really was over.

But in the city the celebrations continued well into the night. Sydneysiders had enthusiastically welcomed the world to their city for the last 16 days and were reluctant to say goodbye to the sport, the ceremonies, the celebrations and the ambience they had been part of. The city and its people had been changed by the Games. That is part of the magic of the Olympic experience.

Closing Ceremony

Volume Two
Chapter Three



9. Athletes keep themselves warm by getting in the spirit and enjoying the larrikinism of the ceremony

10. The Harbour Bridge erupts in fireworks as an F-111 bomber zooms over the Olympic Stadium, the city and off into the night, taking the Olympic flame with it. Extending the celebration from the Olympic Stadium into the city was designed as a thank you for Sydneysiders

10



ADAM PRETTYWALLSPORT





4

LIFE IN THE VILLAGES





OLYMPIC VILLAGES

The right to stage a modern Olympic Games carries with it some onerous obligations. These include ensuring that groups of people who are central to the operation of the Games are properly accommodated for the event. The biggest obligation is to the athletes.

The Olympic Village is well known as a unique communal experience for athletes and team officials who have come from most regions of the world. Less well known are the arrangements for the accredited media and the technical officials who are so vital to the sport competitions. These people, too, come from all over the world and for a brief period, mix with many others who begin as strangers and become friends in the extraordinary context of the Games. The accommodation they share is part of this experience.

For most cities, the sudden influx of many thousands of people for these functions also creates a major challenge to find suitable spaces. As numbers have grown, it was inevitable the successful mechanism of the Olympic Village would be reflected in approaches to providing other accommodation. There are similarities in the way the villages operate but also significant differences; the Media Village did not have a discotheque, but then, there was no alcohol bar for the athletes. Life in the villages calls for some concessions from individuals, but the rewards are great. These are the stories of the Sydney 2000 Games villages.

The Athletes Village

The coming together of athletes in the Olympic Village lies at the very core of the Olympic ideal. To its residents the Village confirms membership of an elite club of the world's best athletes. It provides the comfort, sustenance and security without which the participants could not compete at their very best. In the Village all Olympians receive the same level of accommodation and service, regardless of sport, nation, ranking, fame or economic background. The Village is crucial to the realisation of the Olympic Movement's deepest aspiration for intercultural communication and exchange. So prized has this experience become in recent years that athletes from several countries have ensured their right to stay in the Village after their events were over.

The Sydney 2000 Games saw a partial reversal of the recent tendency for the highest profile athletes to forsake the Olympic Village in favour of accommodation at luxury hotels. Several big-name athletes moved into the Village from hotels they had originally chosen, to get away from the attentions of the media and to enjoy the camaraderie of their fellows.

The top priority for any Olympic Village is to get all the basics right – wholesome, fresh, familiar food, comfortable

accommodation, clean facilities and hot showers being first and foremost.

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Village accommodated all these needs and more and the athletes were full of praise. The 94 ha Sydney Village was the first in Olympic history able to accommodate all the athletes participating at a Games in the one location. They moved into 850 houses and 350 apartments. At its peak the Village housed almost 11000 athletes – 1000 more than expected; the extras were mostly track and field athletes. It had a total occupancy of over 15 000, including team officials. This created a population density far greater than the future community of about 6000 residents of the new suburb of Newington, which the Village will become. Yet participants raved about the low-rise, walk-up living accommodations, broad avenues and open space. It gave them a respite from the hurly-burly of the spectator and media frenzy outside the Village gates.

Food, another basic concern, received just as many high commendations. If consumption provides the most accurate measure of satisfaction, the chefs outdid themselves, preparing an average 50 000 meals a day and a total of 62 000 during the Games' peak. The Villagers put away far more 'tucker' than expected. By the day before the Opening Ceremony, orders for some of the daily favourites, such as pizza, cheese, pasta and rice, had outstripped projected demand for the entire Games period! Two million litres of bottled water, 150 000 litres of milk, 110 000 kg of beef, 100 kg of garlic, 10 000 kg of pasta, 500 000 apples and 365 kg of raisins were consumed over the course of the Games. Other favourites were pumpkin, asparagus, and potato and leek soup, apricot yogurt-topped muesli bars, omelettes and raw nuts.



3

ROGER SCOTT/SOCOG



ALEX HESSE/SOCOG 2

1. The Olympic Village, housing 17 000 athletes from 199 nations, was a hive of activity during its four weeks of operation
2. To overcome language difficulties, all streets and houses were marked with coloured signs, each featuring a different Australian animal
3. Athletes relax in the International Zone which provided a meeting place for athletes, guests and media and also housed the Village retail area



4

MATT TURNER/ALLSPORT



BOB PETERS/OCA



JANE HUNT/OCA

There were 1500 items each day on four menus – international, vegetarian, halal and kosher. Lisa Vorano, the national account manager for food supplier John Lewis, said that some athletes went back repeatedly for seconds and thirds, desirous of trying everything. The cornucopia of tastes was particularly appealing to participants in power sports and to those fortunates who competed early in the fortnight and could forget about diets for a while. Another popular favourite was the Olympic Village barbecue. Meat and potatoes remain a staple for athletes the world over.

The Main Dining Hall held 4900 people and covered 14 800 sq m. It became one of the meeting places where athletes could really get to talk on a friendly, casual and

relaxed basis to their counterparts from other countries and other sports. It was in the Main Dining Hall where Koreans from both sides of their heavily fortified border first began to get to know each other and share experiences.

An extensive retail area was established in the International Zone of the Olympic Village. Retail outlets included a photo shop, packaging and courier service, telecommunications centre, Internet surf shack facility, travel agent, bank, post office, general merchandise store, hair salon, florist, dry cleaner, shoe repair and clothing alterations. Games sponsors provided most services.

The Olympic Village also provided free English language tuition, a first for the Olympic Movement. The daily classes concentrated on spoken communication, using Australian and Sydney themes, so that its 'students' could make more of their Olympic experience.

Much attention was given to providing a varied and interesting recreation and entertainment program for residents in the Olympic Village. A Dance Club was run from the Residential Zone every night from 9 pm to midnight. Nights were themed, and local and international disc jockeys played popular music. No alcohol was served in the Olympic Village; non-alcoholic 'mocktails' were served in the Dance Club, however.

Live entertainment was provided also, with performances in the amphitheatre every day from lunchtime to early evening. Because of the proximity to residential housing and the needs of athletes who were preparing for competition, performances stopped by 9 pm. Recent-release movies, in English with a range of subtitles, were shown between 11 am and mid-evening each day in the Chef's Hall.



SOPHIE CAPES/OCA

While each of these programs catered to interests expressed by NOCs on previous visits, the entertainment program was not widely patronised. This was most likely because of the relative proximity of the Olympic Village to the city centre. Sydney's safety and affordability, the scope of free entertainment, especially at the Live Sites, and the fact that this was a first-time visit for many athletes to Australia, all tended to draw Village residents into the city. Street performances were the most popular aspect of the Village entertainment program, with performers moving around the Village adding colour and a community feel.

The Library, video viewing and music listening facility also provided a relaxing option for Village residents. The Library contained more than 1000 books and 200 newspapers and magazines. There were 20 individual music listening stations available and more than 200 music compact discs. Residents were able to watch footage of Olympic competition at the video viewing facility. A one-day chess tournament between world champion chess players was also held in the Olympic Village. After this, a 14-year-old Australian chess prodigy played 20 residents simultaneously, which was very popular.

In the last few days before the Opening Ceremony, when adrenalin flow became a raging torrent, the longest lines seemed to be at the aromatic massage centre. "When you are

4. The Main Dining Hall served a variety of foods to cater for all tastes. A dozen executive chefs from around the world oversaw 550 cooks who prepared more than 1.5 million meals
5. A group of Brazilian athletes have fun playing their tambourine
6. Starting at lunchtime every day, bands perform on a stage in the International Zone to entertain athletes and visitors

waiting to compete, it is great to be able to relax, and I can't think of a better way to chill out than with a free facial," said Canadian swimmer Marianne Limpert.

While not all Village features found favour with everyone, others were so popular they were oversubscribed. The 100-terminal Surf Shack was swamped by the demand. In retrospect, given the extent to which most young people have integrated the computer and the Internet into their lives, this is not surprising. By the end of the first week of the Games, athletes had sent or received 203 390 messages and visited the Surf Shack 22 480 times. Lengthy queues were the rule.

Several Chefs de Mission said that they felt that the International 'entertainment' Zone, where visitors were received, was too small, and the daily Village performances presented too narrow a range of cultural and intercultural options. On the other hand, there were few takers for the daily educational and cultural tours on offer.

Others expressed concern about the absence of a track and training pool in the Village. These facilities existed nearby in Sydney Olympic Park, but were reserved for athletes in aquatics and track and field.

For many villagers the most valued service was the free Polyclinic, which gave them medical and dental care they could only dream about in their home countries. More than 700 athletes received dental work during the Games. One patient said she had been waiting eight years to see a dentist. Another required work on 14 of his teeth.

Heroes of the Games

Creating and staffing a successful Olympic Village was an enormous achievement. It had all the requirements of a fully serviced town. At the time of the Games, the Village was the fifth largest 'city' in New South Wales accommodating a



7

Olympic Villages

Volume Two
Chapter Four



KATE SPENCERSOCOG

population whose numbers changed daily. It had to be sensitive to and affirm a diversity of cultural, linguistic, religious and political backgrounds as varied and richly complex as that of the entire world. It had to respect and support some of the most ambitious – and some would also say highly strung – individuals in the world, at one of the most stressful times in their lives, quickly meeting their requests when they arose, giving them room to relax and be themselves on other occasions, while protecting their security at all times. This was no ordinary town.

The logistics were daunting. How do you effectively and economically purchase or rent, distribute and service beds, bed linen and towels for 10 000 people, knowing that in one month they will no longer be needed? The Olympic Village required 52 000 sheets, 163 000 towels and 370 000 toilet rolls. The toilet paper itself was enough to stretch halfway around the world. The linen weighed 825 000 kg and would take the average family of four with eight loads of washing per week 264 years to wash. The towels stacked together would reach a height three times that of Mt Kosciuszko, Australia's highest mountain. During the 33 days of Olympic operation, the beds were made 396 000 times, the 4000 bathrooms cleaned daily.



9

KIERAN MADDEN/SOCOG



8

PHILLIPA HAYDINSOCOG

7. A map of the world with photographs of athletes indicating their home country illustrates the diversity of nations and cultures at the Games

8. The Australian team took great pleasure in decorating their temporary housing

9. Access to the Residential Zone was reserved for accredited athletes and team officials, giving them a place to relax and prepare for their event away from the public eye

Olympic Villages

Volume Two
Chapter Four



10. One of the major attractions in the Village was the Games Hall, which provided a range of free-play arcade games and pool tables

11. Every NOC was welcomed to the Village with an Australian-themed ceremony. Schools from across the state of New South Wales participated in this program, giving 5000 students the opportunity to be actively involved in the Games

12. Transport within the Village operated 24 hours per day. Buses provided a 22-stop loop around the Village



ROGER SCOTT/SOCOG



JANE HUNT/SOCOG

How do you establish an effective communication system for 199 team delegations in residences that will become family housing after the Games? How do you coordinate all their transportation? How do you prepare a team of temporary employees and volunteers for these demanding and sensitive challenges? There were 2000 kitchen and 1800 housekeeping staff alone in a staff totalling 9000 in all. The 250 chefs had to be recruited from all across Australia and the world.

The success of the Olympic Village illustrated SOCOG's careful planning, volunteer and staff recruitment, orientation and training, which were seven years in the making. For the staff, the Games provided some with a much-appreciated pay cheque, others a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to contribute to Australia's proud welcome to the world.

Teachers, business people and nurses signed up to be kitchen workers, desk clerks and security personnel, while others worked in their regular occupations to ensure that the athletes of the world got the best professional service.

One bus driver said that when he heard about the difficulty in getting trained drivers, he took leave and signed up with Olympic Roads and Transport Authority. One Sydney housecleaner told her clients that she would be gone for the duration of the Games so that she could work at the Olympic Village to ensure that the athletes' apartments were well cleaned. Such work did not go unnoticed. "The staff and volunteers were the real heroes of these Games," said Canadian field hockey press attache Yan Huckendubler. "They were always friendly and supportive, no matter how difficult our demands. Whenever someone was stressed, they found a nice way to give them a candy."

G'day, G'day!

The Australians' eagerness to please and the respect they held for athletes was brought home to every delegation in the Welcoming Ceremony, held in the Olympic Village amphitheatre in the International Zone. No team was

considered too small, no NOC too insignificant to receive its own formal welcome. The Ceremony was begun by an Aboriginal dancing troupe, the leader of which presented the delegation head with a message-stick. Olympic Village Mayor Graham Richardson, or his delegate, addressed all new arrivals. The assembled crowd stood for the raising of the country's flag, the playing of its national anthem and the singing of the Olympic hymn. The ceremony closed with a local school choir, at times their voices thin against the wind, but always cheerful and enthusiastic when belting out the song that quickly became the Sydney anthem:

*You are the heroes of the world,
We welcome you with open arms.
We hope that you feel that you're at home,
Let's join our hands and be as one.*

*G'day, G'day. Welcome to Australia,
G'day, G'day. That's the Australian way.
G'day, G'day. Welcome to Australia,
G'day, G'day. That's the Australian way.*

For athletes and coaches, the Ceremony marked the end of their long journey to the Games, and the beginning of their Olympic experiences. Welcomed and applauded by their peers from around the world, it confirmed their membership in that elite group of athletes who call themselves Olympians. The click of cameras could be heard throughout the ceremonies. The pounding of their hearts, in anticipation of what was to come, was heard only by the athletes themselves.

The community of Olympians was strengthened by the work of the IOC Athletes' Commission in the Olympic Village during the Games. At past Games, the Athletes Commission has provided an 'information and help' desk, and organised opportunities for athletes to meet to discuss issues of mutual concern. In Sydney, the Commission concentrated its efforts on conducting a direct election of eight athletes from the Olympic Summer Games as representatives on the IOC, the first such election for IOC membership in Olympic history. Previously, all new IOC members were nominated by existing members. De Coubertin called it 'delegation-in-reverse'.

Forty-five active and recently retired athletes were nominated for the eight positions. The Athletes Commission prepared and distributed a brochure identifying the candidates and outlining their views. An election desk was provided in the Main Dining Hall, so that each of the 11 400 athletes had an opportunity to vote. Posters and the Olympic Village newspaper encouraged everyone to take part in the election, while delegations with candidates quietly lobbied for their nominees.

Sergei Bubka (Ukraine, athletics), Robert Ctvrtlik (USA, volleyball), Susan O'Neill (Australia, swimming), Alexander Popov (Russia, swimming), Roland Barr (Germany, rowing), Charmaine Crooks (Canada, athletics), Manuel Estiarte (Spain, water polo) and Jan Zelezny (Czech Republic, athletics) were the successful candidates.

Athletes in the Olympic Village also donated memorabilia of their Olympic participation to the Olympic Museum in



NICK WILSON/ALLSPORT

Lausanne and to Olympic Aid, the humanitarian organisation founded in 1994 by Norwegian speed skater Johann Olav Koss. In Sydney, they auctioned off athletes' memorabilia via the Internet to assist disadvantaged children in Australia and children in refugee camps around the world.

A Gold Medal for the Environment

Because housing and effective town planning are so vital to modern living, the Olympic Village provides each host city with an opportunity to contribute an important legacy to its own community, and a legacy of leading edge design and technology to the world. Not surprisingly, a successful Village is critical to the success of any Games and has a significant impact upon the renewal of the host city.

The Olympic Village showcased Sydney's expectations of a 'green Games', and helped fulfil the Olympic Movement's commitment to a sustainable environment, the 'third pillar of Olympism'. In design, construction, waste management, and energy and water conservation, the Village was a model of environmentalism. Ninety per cent of the waste materials from the Village were recycled.

Perhaps its most striking feature was its innovative use of solar energy. The Olympic Village will become one of the world's largest solar-powered suburbs. It has the capacity to generate more than one million kWh per year of electricity. All permanent houses have photovoltaic solar energy cells and gas-boosted solar water heaters. The buildings also save

electricity by making the most of natural light and ventilation. Throughout the Games, Olympic Village residents and staff were actively recruited to the goals of environmentalism. Prizes were awarded to the national delegations that made the best efforts in recycling. Educational reminders were posted throughout the Village and published daily in the Olympic Village newspaper.

The results were very encouraging. Many athletes attempted to 'avoid, reduce, reuse and recycle' conscientiously, and signed the environmental organisation Greenpeace's Olympic Environmental Declaration, pledging their commitment to environmentalism.

Others attended a reception at the Greenpeace flagship, the *Rainbow Warrior*. "If 10 000 people can take a message back from these Games [about the environment]", said Shirley Strickland de la Hunty, seven-time Olympic athletics medallist, "then that is an achievement in itself."

Although Greenpeace was critical of some of the efforts of the Sydney organisers in other areas, it praised the Olympic Village and other developments for environmentalism. This positive evaluation of the Village was echoed by other arbiters.

Even before President Juan Antonio Samaranch declared Sydney the "best ever Games", Chairman of the IOC Co-ordination Commission for Sydney Jacques Rogge had pronounced the Olympic Village "the best ever". Village inhabitants enthusiastically agreed.

Olympic Villages Volume Two Chapter Four



13

ROGER SCOTT/SOCOG

13. The Surf Shack, attracting thousands of athletes daily, offered free access to the internet and also featured the IBM fan mail program. Athletes created 3100 personal webpages which triggered 250 000 fan emails in response

14. An athlete takes refuge in the Village flower shop and watches an Olympic boxing match on TV



14

ROGER SCOTT/SOCOG

Olympic Villages

Volume Two
Chapter Four



15. Media were housed in Lidcombe, where an old hospital site was refurbished with the aim to create a pleasant village atmosphere for the world's media, linked by public transport to Games venues

16. A journalist takes break from the frantic race to cover the Games

Media Village

The Media Village was at Lidcombe, just 6 km south-west of Sydney Olympic Park (SOP). The site had formerly been a government hospital and contained striking heritage-listed buildings as well as the space for temporary buildings needed to meet Olympic requirements.

The Village was visually attractive and provided an imaginative introduction to Australia. It afforded a soothing and comforting retreat for an assembly of some of the most important contributors to the Games, and a reminder that it was once a protected and protecting place.

Passing through security at the entry point, residents walked through an avenue of colourful Olympic flags and banners, similar to other Games. But then two fenced enclosures stopped them in their tracks. One displayed a selection of exotic birds native to Australia, like the pink cockatoo and the galah. The other held specimens of the fabled hopping marsupials of the Australian outback, the kangaroo and the wallaby. These fascinating exhibits had been assembled by nearby Featherdale Wildlife Park, a private zoo where the animals normally reside. They were fed and cared for by their usual keepers, which helped prevent stress caused by relocation. They returned to the zoo immediately after the Games. The exhibit was a delightful way of meeting the creatures of a remarkable and unique continent. As one American broadcaster was overheard to say, quoting from the *Wizard of Oz*: "Toto, we aren't in Kansas anymore."

The centre of the Media Village, the original site of the hospital, was a serene environment. The low-rise buildings, surrounded by mature trees, gave a congenial, home-away-

from-home feel to the place. "It's much preferable to a brand-new place where workers are still putting the finishing touches on the apartments when you move in. That adds to the sense of speediness and stress an Olympic assignment creates," commented one resident. "This Village provides a respite from the hurly-burly of the Games."

There was a central village green, some parts of which were used for a playing field. The remainder was filled with tables and chairs occupied by members of the media – writing, drinking coffee, reading newspapers or just taking in the sun. There was the remarkable juxtaposition of the world's media working with the most modern technology, on laptops and mobile phones, against a background of late colonial period public buildings.

Beyond this quadrangle were modern prefabricated cottages with porches adorned with pots of flowers. The cottages had common areas with kitchen facilities, lounges, tables and chairs. The bedrooms each had its own ensuite bathroom. The rooms were small but well laid out. Each of the single beds was made up with a striking blue doona featuring the Sydney 2000 logo of the Millennium Athlete. These proved to be popular souvenirs here, as they did at the Olympic Village.

Traditionally, the Media Village has been a place for the media to relax between assignments. Some went there only to sleep. The journalists' basic requirements were good travel arrangements, a comfortable bed and good food. But increasingly some members of the media choose to work in the Village, so it has to be an effective work environment as well, with the necessary support services. This meant a 24-hour sub-press centre, food service, dry cleaning and laundry, internal shuttle service and external buses to the Main Press Centre and International Broadcast Centre and all competition venues. There was a shop that sold souvenir items and 'essentials' such as chocolates, underwear and ties. The reception centre provided room allocation and keys, delivered luggage and answered the questions required to familiarise residents with their temporary home.

But these were the Games of the new Millennium and there were also many in-house features that reflected what 21st-century journalists need for an effective work environment. They are clearly more fitness-conscious than their predecessors, so there was a fitness centre. There were bicycles for use by anyone who understood the imperative of riding on the left.

Most remarkable was a body care centre, where overworked and tired journalists could obtain stress-releasing massages or aromatherapy while listening to soothing new age music. A lovely scent and sweet sounds wafted from the entrance. People felt better just for walking past.

During the Games 5800 members of the accredited media lived in the Media Village. Because residents had come from all over the world, and stories needed to be filed at all times, 24-hour operation was essential. The pub never closed and provided another place for media to gather and discuss breaking news, make new friends and reconnect with old ones.



BEATRIX NAMISOCOG



JANE HUNT/SOCOG

Technical Officials Village

For the 1300 judges, referees and technical officials called from around the world to contribute to the orderly conduct of the competition at the Sydney 2000 Games, 'life in the Village meant a stay not in a purpose-built new suburb but in dormitories usually lived in by university students, who at the time of the Games were enjoying a holiday. This Village did not have the many features found in the Olympic Village, but then the officials spent a great deal less time there and were closer to public facilities.

Each IF was responsible for finding the required officials for their sport. SOCOG was required to provide accommodation, transportation and support services for them.

The original plan was to have a single village for all officials. Later the plan was revised in favour of four sectors at three different university sites within Sydney: the Camperdown and Camden campuses of the University of Sydney and the North Ryde campus of Macquarie University.

In each case, college residences were spruced up with paint, new carpets and furnishings, and new pillows and blankets. Not only was this option more financially viable, it was also felt that the grounds of the universities offered a more pleasant environment for the officials.

The four sectors were open from 11 September to 4 October. Officials began arriving the day the Village opened. Most officials were given single rooms with shared bathroom facilities, but some shared rooms. As it was generally more convenient for officials from the same sporting federation to be in close proximity to each other, male and female officials shared the same residences, using separate bathroom facilities. Swimming, gymnastics and baseball were at Sector 1 (Camperdown Campus), athletics, hockey, badminton, basketball, taekwondo and fencing at Sector 2 (Camperdown Campus), archery, handball, modern pentathlon, shooting, softball, tennis and table tennis at Sector 3 (North Ryde Campus) and equestrian at Sector 4 (Camden Campus). Other federations stayed at a variety of hotels.

As members of the Olympic Family, technical officials were accredited at the airport and supplied with Games uniforms from the Uniform Distribution and Accreditation Centre (UDAC).

For the officials who arrived before the Games opened, excursions were organised to see the sights of Sydney. But once the Games started, the focus was on sport. At all locations, transport was available to take officials directly to their respective sport's competition venues. Initially there were some teething problems with transportation, but by the time of the Opening Ceremony, buses for the officials were running reliably and accurately.

Because some sports ran late into the evening, technical officials often returned to their villages close to midnight, and hungry. To accommodate the varying hours kept by residents, each sector had one eating facility open 24 hours, with something substantial to eat always available for late-night returnees.

Although university residences were used to host the technical officials, the operating philosophy was to provide hotel-type facilities with all the required services and customer service orientation. Indeed, most of the staff and volunteers working in the facilities had hotel management or customer service employment backgrounds with the result that a professional approach was taken to resolve the few difficulties officials encountered.

Officials were provided with television coverage of the Games by the host broadcaster Sydney Olympic Broadcasting Organisation and there were sport information terminals in each facility. As well, officials had access to the university libraries and computer rooms. A sport information desk was staffed to provide updates on sport schedules. A reception desk was staffed to provide information for any other inquiries.

The Technical Officials Village facilities had a minimum level of security, consistent with the type of service being provided. There was access control, and security officials walked the premises regularly to ensure adequate protection of the premises and the visitors.

While it was essential that officials devoted themselves fully to their events while they were taking place, on reflection it would have been an excellent initiative to have provided more gateways for them to enjoy a broader experience of the Games once their formal responsibilities were completed.

Olympic Villages Volume Two Chapter Four



17

JANE HUNT/SOCOG

17. Technical Officials were handed a Welcome Bag upon arrival

18. New arrivals, housed on various university sites, were greeted by volunteers



18

JANE HUNT/SOCOG





5

THE COMPETITION



Sydney 2000



AQUATICS: DIVING

**Sydney International Aquatic Centre,
Sydney Olympic Park
22-30 September 2000**

With the inclusion of synchronized diving on the Olympic diving program, the Sydney International Aquatic Centre was awash with the world's best divers who produced a spectacular diving competition.

The Chinese were the leading divers in the world coming into the meet and lived up to their billing, winning five gold and five silver medals in the eight finals. Their results were outstanding, especially the performances of two of their athletes, Xiong Ni and Fu Mingxia, who had retired and had been lured back for one more Olympic Games.

Xiong Ni first sprang to world attention when, as a 14-year-old, he came agonisingly close to snatching the gold medal from Greg Louganis in the platform final at the 1988 Seoul Games. In Barcelona he won bronze in the platform and in Atlanta he moved to the springboard, where he won the gold in the 3 m event. Xiong then retired and did not dive from 1996 to 1998. When he decided to return to diving he discovered it to be a challenge. "I found it very hard to find my previous form. It was especially hard on my body – I had not trained and I had gained weight."

In Sydney Xiong was at his best in the men's 3 m springboard where he pulled off the narrowest and most dramatic of victories. The world champion, the Russian Federation's Dmitri Saoutine, was leading in the final round but failed to nail his dive. In contrast Xiong was magnificent, scoring 81.60 for his inward three somersaults with tuck. He claimed gold and became the second man to win back-to-back victories in the event. He went on to collect a second gold medal with compatriot Xiao Hailiang in the men's synchronized 3 m springboard final.

Fu Mingxia was another Chinese champion to come out of retirement. She retired after Atlanta where she had swept the platform and springboard titles. But time refreshed her, brought a change of mind and she resumed training. In Sydney she somersaulted and twisted her way to gold in the 3 m springboard and silver in the women's synchronized 3 m springboard. With the medals around her neck she said, "Standing on the medal podium, I felt that all the roads I've walked since I returned to diving until now were just a small part of my life."

Competition

Olympic diving had not changed its competition format since the Paris Olympic Games in 1924. However, at Sydney, two synchronized diving events were introduced. These were the

3 m springboard and the 10 m platform events in both the men's and women's competitions.

In synchronized diving the pairs competed in an outright final, each performing five dives. Two dives were given a set degree of difficulty of 2.0, regardless of the true value of the dives. The other three dives were given a degree of difficulty based on the average degree of difficulty of the pair's dives. Getting the 'synch' right from the springboard was far more difficult than from a fixed platform. Judges checked the similarity of the height of the divers when they sprang off the boards and the timing of their joint entry into the water.

Women's 3 m Springboard

Fu Mingxia and Guo Jingjing of China applied early pressure, performing almost technically perfect dives. It was a close competition, with Fu claiming gold in the final dive when she produced a reverse 1½ somersaults with 2½ twists which put her 11.61 points ahead of Guo. Doerte Lindner of Germany won the bronze medal.

Men's 3 m Springboard

As Xiong Ni of China made the last dive to determine the gold medal, he stood poised on the edge of the platform; the crowd hushed, then burst into cheers as he entered the water. Ecstatic with his performance, Xiong rushed to hug his coach before plunging into the hot-tub and burying his head under water as he realised that he had just won another Olympic gold. Mexico's Fernando Platas won the silver, with the bronze going to the Russian Federation's Dmitri Saoutine.

Women's 10 m Platform

The Chinese were the favourites from the 42 divers who competed in this event, but an unknown American stole the

Aquatics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Divers practice at the Sydney International Aquatic Centre before the Olympic competition
2. Ni Xiong, Chinese veteran diver, celebrates after defending his 3 m springboard title
3. A quiet moment for China's Fu Mingxia during the 3 m springboard competition

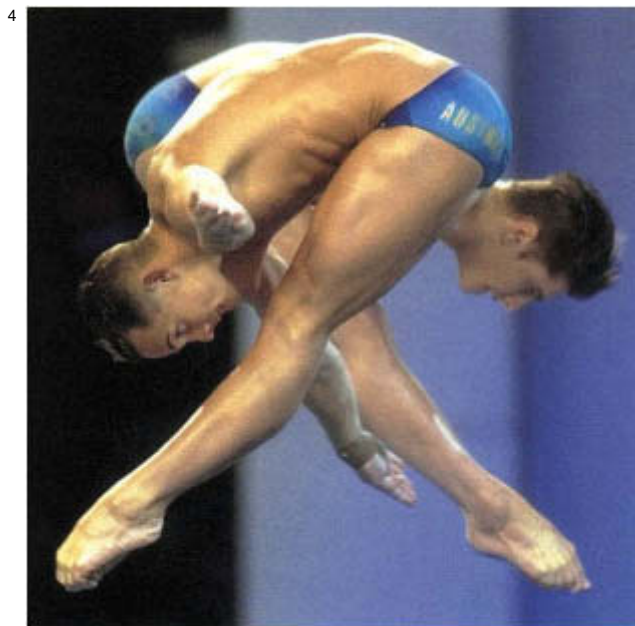


JED JACOBSON/ALLSPORT



SEAN GARRIS/WORTHALLSPORT

Aquatics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



DAVID LONGSTREATH/PHOTO

team was about to perform. After the final dive the Chinese emerged as convincing winners with 365.58 points, ahead of the Russian Federation with 329.97 points. Australia won bronze with 322.86, thus winning its second diving medal in one day after a 76-year drought. The US team finished fourth with 320.91 points.

Women's Synchronized 10 m Platform

The Chinese team won gold with 345.12 – a comfortable margin over the silver medallists, Canada, who finished with 312.03 points. The Chinese led from the start with precision diving, scoring four 10s in their second dive. After four of the five dives, China, Canada and Austria led in that order, with Australia in fourth place. However, diving is very much a game of tactics, and the Australians kept their best dive until last, enabling them to move up into third place with 301.50 points.

The bronze medal was a remarkable achievement for host nation Australia, which had last won a medal in diving at the 1924 Paris Games, when Dick Eve won gold in the plain high dive, a diving event not on the Olympic program since those Games.

Men's Synchronized 10 m Platform

Diving from a platform 10 metres above the water level and three metres in width allowed enough room for the divers to execute their synchronized dives without colliding. The Russian Federation's combination of Dmitri Saoutine and Igor Loukachine performed outstanding dives, including a reverse 3½ somersault with a 3.4 degree of difficulty, to win gold. They scored 365.04, defeating the powerful Chinese team who took silver with 358.74 points, and the German team who came third with 338.88 points.



SHAUN BOTTENILL/SPORT

show, winning the first gold medal for the USA in women's 10 m platform since 1964. The winner, Laura Wilkinson, had switched from gymnastics to diving just six years before. Her final dive was a back 2½ somersault with a ½ twist with a 3.0 degree of difficulty rating and it scored a high 75.6 points. China had won this event at the past four Olympic Games, so the pressure was on Li Na to maintain the title for China. Her final dive was excellent, but she did not score enough points to beat Wilkinson and she finished with the silver. Anne Montminy of Canada won the bronze medal.

Men's 10 m Platform

In the final diving event China once more proved too strong for its competition. Tian Liang, the gold medallist in the men's synchronized 10 m platform, received 10s from his first dive and continued to dive well. His closest competition was his countryman Hu Jia, a 17-year-old replacement to the team. Hu Jia won silver with 713.55, behind Tian Liang's 724.53 points. The Russian Federation's Dmitri Saoutine claimed the bronze medal, his fourth medal at these Games.

Women's Synchronized 3 m Springboard

In the women's synchronized 3 m springboard the Russian Federation's divers again proved their perfect synchronization. Vera Ilina and Ioulia Pakhalina performed the only dive rated with a 3.1 degree of difficulty – the reverse 1 – somersault – twist. Winning with 332.64 points, the Russian Federation was followed by the Chinese team with 321.60 points. The bronze going to Ukraine with 290.34 points. The Russian's win delayed China's Fu Mingxia's claim to four Olympic titles. On winning silver Fu said, "In terms of practical skill, I think they [the Russian pair] are better."

Men's Synchronized 3 m Springboard

After winning the men's 3 m springboard individual event, Xiong Ni joined with Xiao Hailiang in the Chinese team to grab the highest scores from their first dive. They received a perfect 10.0. There was a delay during the second round of dives when the judges questioned the dive that the Mexican



MIKE HEWITT/SPORT

- 4. Perfection in the air. Mathew Helm (right) and Robert Newbery during the men's 10 m synchronized diving competition. The Australian pair placed fifth in the overall ranking
- 5. Laura Wilkinson dives to the women's 10 m platform gold
- 6. An underwater view during the Olympic diving competition



AQUATICS: SWIMMING

**Sydney International Aquatic Centre, Sydney Olympic Park
16–23 September 2000**

Even before competitors had squeezed into their new and controversial Lycra body suits, let alone dived in the water, there was a war of words building between the two swimming superpowers – the USA and Australia. But when competition got under way it was one of the smallest countries in the world that left an indelible mark on the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games swimming program.

Swimming for the Netherlands, Pieter van den Hoogenband and Inge de Bruijn rewrote the record books with their domination of the sprint events. In front of a sell-out crowd, van den Hoogenband began his claim as the fastest swimmer in the world by upstaging home-town hero Ian Thorpe in the 200 m freestyle, breaking his own world record in the final.

A day later he was making headlines again, setting a world record in the semifinals of the 100 m freestyle. By the time he got to the starting blocks for the final he seemed invincible, defeating defending Olympic champion, Alexander Popov of the Russian Federation, to win gold. Van den Hoogenband finished his sprinting blitz with a bronze in the 50 m freestyle.

The tabloids were screaming 'Double Dutch' when compatriot Inge de Bruijn also began winning gold medals and setting world records. She steamrolled the opposition in the 50 m and 100 m freestyle and 100 m butterfly and was the top female swimmer at the Games. In addition to her three gold medals, she earned a silver as part of the Dutch team in the 4 x 100 m freestyle relay.

"I just wish everybody could feel what I feel right now," she said after her triumph in the 50 m. "It's an awesome feeling, when you reach for something so high and get it. It's easy for people to expect you to win three gold medals, but it's not easy to do it."

A large crowd of Dutch supporters, dressed in orange from head to toe, cheered on their champions from the stands. On the final swimming medal tally the Netherlands finished third behind the USA and Australia and ensured a variety of anthems was played at the Sydney International Aquatic Centre.

Venue

The Sydney International Aquatic Centre, opened in 1994, is a sport-for-all complex with a warm-up pool and children's pool, fountains and a gymnasium. During the Games, seating was extended from 4500 to 17 500, making it the largest Olympic swimming venue of its kind. The Centre received praise from President Juan Antonio Samaranch as "the best swimming pool I have seen in my life". His assessment was echoed by athletes such as Gary Hall Jr from the USA, "It's my favourite pool. I think it's the best in the world."





ROD TAYLOR/FAIRFAX

Program

While the program of 32 events remained the same as Atlanta, there were some changes in the format. Semifinals were introduced for individual events (200 m or less). To accommodate this change, the swimming program was extended from seven to eight days. Relays, which had previously occurred on the final days of the program, were now interspersed throughout the eight days.



IAN WALDREUTERS



MARK DADSWELL/ALLSPORT

Nine hundred and eighty-one athletes – 573 men and 410 women – from 150 countries competed in the swimming events, with the largest contingent of 48 competitors coming from the USA. Australia fielded 44, Great Britain 41 and Canada 39 swimmers.

Women's 50 m Freestyle

It was the third gold medal for Inge de Bruijn when she convincingly won the 50 m freestyle ahead of Sweden's Therese Alshammar and Dara Torres of the USA.

Men's 50 m Freestyle

The men's 50 m sprint final is always one of the most anticipated events on the swimming program, but the depth

and quality of the field in Sydney ensured it was one of the most exciting races in history. It read as a *Who's Who* of Olympic swimming. Defending Olympic champion Alexander Popov was attempting to become the first man in history to win gold in the same swimming event three times. Pieter van den Hoogenband wanted to add the 50 m to his gold medal haul and become the first male swimmer to win the 50 m, 100 m and 200 m. Americans Gary Hall Jr and Anthony Ervin were also keen to continue America's dominance in the sport.

Hall nailed the start, taking a single breath on his way across the pool and pulling out to what looked like, through all the froth, a finger-length lead over the world's best – all except his daily swim partner, Ervin, who matched him stroke for stroke. The Americans, plus a fast-finishing Popov and van den Hoogenband, hit the wall in a giant wave. Everyone looked to the Scoreboard to see the results. Ervin and Hall dead-heated for first in a time of 21.98. Van den Hoogenband won the bronze in 22.03 with Popov in sixth place. "This race wasn't about fast times as much as it was about racing," Ervin said. "The fiercest racers came out on top."

Women's 100 m Freestyle

Inge de Bruijn won her second gold comfortably in the 100 m freestyle, finishing just outside the world record that she had set in the semifinal on the previous day. Therese Alshammar of Sweden was second with a dead heat for third between the USA's Dara Torres and Jenny Thompson.

Men's 100 m Freestyle

In the first heat the race was reduced to one man, Eric Moussambani of Equatorial Guinea, who swam the distance in 1:52.72, three times slower than the Olympic record. He was a wildcard entry who had not achieved the qualifying time, and had never swum in a 50 m pool before. Moussambani's performance captured the assembled spectators, who cheered him on wildly. He became an Olympic hero in his own right.

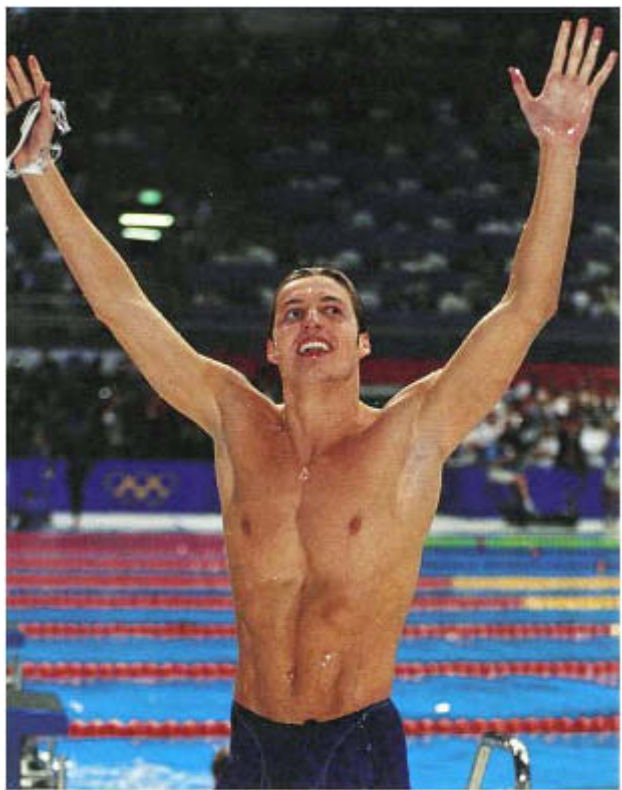
The field for the final, however, was judged to be one of the finest assembled. It included the Russian Federation's Alexander

- 7. Previous page: Ian Thorpe limbers up before his 400 m freestyle heat
- 8. A vociferous crowd turned the Aquatic Centre into a charged arena during the eight days of swimming competition
- 9. Shared glory: US swimmers Gary Hall Jr. and Anthony Ervin are awarded a dual Olympic gold medal after a dead heat in the 50 m freestyle
- 10. Inge de Bruijn relaxes after her world-record breaking swim in the 50 m freestyle semifinal. With her performance in Sydney, de Bruijn advanced to the top ten world record setters at Olympic Games
- 11. Eric Moussambani swims a lone 100 m race which turned him into a media darling and crowd favourite



MIKE POWELL/ALLSPORT

12



AL BELLOVALSPORT

Popov, winner of the event in 1992 and 1996, and Gary Hall Jr of the USA, 1996 silver medallist. Two other finalists, Australia's Michael Klim and the 'flying Dutchman', Pieter van den Hoogenband, had broken the world record earlier in the meet. Klim led at the turn but van den Hoogenband asserted his authority in the final 50 m to defeat a fast-finishing Popov. Hall edged out Klim for the bronze medal. Van den Hoogenband became the first man to sweep the 100 m and 200 m freestyle since Mark Spitz of the USA in 1972.

Women's 200 m Freestyle

Australia's Susie O'Neill, fondly referred to as Madam Butterfly, proved her prowess in freestyle when she won the gold medal in the 200 m. She swam a powerful final 100 m, defeating Martina Moravcova of Slovakia and the 1996 gold medallist Claudia Poll of Costa Rica.

Men's 200 m Freestyle

Pieter van den Hoogenband had broken Ian Thorpe's world record by 0.16 in the first semifinal, thus issuing a challenge to the hero of the first night. The final was set to be a thriller. On the night, after two laps, van den Hoogenband was leading Thorpe, but at the last turn into the final 50 metres they were even. The crowd was roaring, expecting a winning surge by Thorpe. Instead, the Dutch swimmer showed his sprinting ability, outkicking Thorpe and equalling his world record of 1:45.35. Thorpe came second in 1:45.83. "I was pretty flat tonight," Thorpe said, "I'm not going to win every race. It just can't happen."

Women's 400 m Freestyle

Brooke Bennett and Diana Munz, both from the USA, won gold and silver in the women's 400 m freestyle. Claudia Poll of Costa Rica, took the bronze.

Men's 400 m Freestyle

Massimiliano Rosolino of Italy surprised his countrymen when he followed Australia's Ian Thorpe home in the 400 m final. Klete Keller of the USA won the bronze medal.

Women's 800 m Freestyle

Brooke Bennett of the USA pulled off the golden double when she added the 800 m gold to her 400 m victory. Her time of 8:19.67 was a new Olympic record, but was over three seconds shy of the world record set by her compatriot Janet Evans in 1989. "I think I have a long way to go before I catch Janet's legacy," Bennett said. The silver medal went to Yana Klochkova of Ukraine who completed an outstanding Olympic campaign with two gold medals and one silver. The bronze went to Kaitlin Sandeno from the USA.

Men's 1500 m Freestyle

The final day of competition featured the much anticipated 1500 m freestyle clash between Australia's Kieren Perkins, 1992 and 1996 Olympic champion and world record holder, and Grant Hackett, the world champion. Perkins laid down the challenge with a fine sub-15 minute heat win on the day before. In the final, however, Hackett led from the start, never faltered and won comfortably, with Perkins second and Chris Thompson of the USA third.



13

HAMISH BLAIR/SPORT

Aquatics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



12. Pieter van den Hoogenband triumphs in the men's 200 m freestyle, beating hometown hero Ian Thorpe
13. Kieren Perkins (right), exiting champion and silver medallist, congratulates team mate Grant Hackett on his golden performance in the 1500 m freestyle race



AL BELLO/ALLSPORT



SHAUN BOTTEILL/ALLSPORT

15

Women's 100 m Backstroke

Diana Mocanu won in Olympic record time, earning the first gold medal for Romania, with Mai Nakamura of Japan and Nina Zhivanevskaya of Spain winning silver and bronze respectively.

Men's 100 m Backstroke

Lenny Krayzelburg of the USA defeated Australia's Matt Welsh and Germany's Stev Theloke in Olympic record time. Krayzelburg's parents were in the stands to watch their son win gold. "They were crying," Krayzelburg said of them. "In our sport you are judged whether you win or lose the gold medal. It doesn't matter what other accomplishments you have. I've finally achieved that and now it is pretty complete. There are going to be generations that are faster than us. By winning a gold medal you are going into the history books."

Women's 200 m Backstroke

Diana Mocanu of Romania won the women's 200 m backstroke and became the fifth woman in Olympic history to achieve the backstroke double. The silver was won by Roxana Maracineanu of France and the bronze by Miki Nakao of Japan.

Men's 200 m Backstroke

The USA's Lenny Krayzelburg earned his second gold medal of the Games in the 200 m backstroke. Aaron Peirsol of the USA came second and Australia's Matt Welsh took the bronze.

Women's 100 m Breaststroke

It looked as though South African Penny Heyns would repeat her breaststroke double gold from the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games. Heyns hit the wall at the turn in 31.10 – faster than the split in her world record race. But lurking in third place with other ideas was Megan Quann of the USA, who had set herself a target of winning two gold medals and setting two world records. After a brilliant turn her pace quickened and her strokes, suddenly smarter, smoother and longer, struck a new rhythm. She started pegging back the difference and

overtook the fading Heyns, winning in an American record 1:07.05 from the fast-finishing Leisel Jones of Australia, with Heynes third. "I'm on top of the world right now. I think the back half of my race has really improved since I started doing 100 km a week. I turned from sprinting to being able to finish my race," Quann said.

Men's 100 m Breaststroke

The 100 m breaststroke gold was Italy's first gold medal in Sydney's swimming competition. Domenico Fioravanti won in Olympic record time ahead of Ed Moses of the USA and Roman Sloudnov of the Russian Federation.

Women's 200 m Breaststroke

Hungary's Agnes Kovacs won the 200 m breaststroke with a come-from-behind victory over US swimmers Kristy Kowal and Amanda Beard. It was Hungary's first gold medal in the event since 1952.

Men's 200 m Breaststroke

Italy's Domenico Fioravanti won the breaststroke double – the first man ever to achieve this – when he came from behind to win the 200 m breaststroke with his compatriot, Davide Rummolo, taking the bronze. South Africa's Terence Parkin won the silver medal.

Women's 100 m Butterfly

Inge de Bruijn of the Netherlands won the first of her three gold medals in the 100 m butterfly in world record time, defeating Slovakia's Martina Moravcova and the USA's Dara Torres.

Men's 100 m Butterfly

Sweden won its first swimming gold medal since 1980 when Lars Froelander upset the highly fancied Australians, world record holder Michael Klim and Geoff Huegill. While Klim was focusing on Huegill to his left, Froelander swam past Klim on his right, with a powerful second 50 metres.

Women's 200 m Butterfly

Australia's Susie O'Neill, world record holder and defending Olympic champion, wasn't quite as fortunate in her pet event as she had been in the 200 m freestyle. Misty Hyman of the USA caused an upset when she outswam O'Neill, who had been unbeaten in this event for six years. Hyman went out strongly



SHAUN BOTTEILL/ALLSPORT

16

14. Powerful push: Lenny Krayzelburg (centre) at the start of the 200 m backstroke semifinal

15. Diana Mocanu, aged 16, won an impressive backstroke double in her first Olympic Games

16. Domenico Fioravanti is on gold medal course in the 100 m breaststroke final. Never having won Olympic gold in swimming, Italy can now celebrate three gold medals, two of which were won by Fioravanti



17

MICHAEL STEELE/ALLSPORT

and held a body length lead over O'Neill at the 150 m mark. The crowd of 17,500 urged O'Neill on with shouts of "Susie!", but the Australian never made a run at Hyman. In winning the gold medal, Hyman swam a lifetime best. She broke out in a huge grin and screamed, "Oh my God" over and over when she realised she had won. O'Neill congratulated her. "I swam as well as I could," she said. "Obviously, I'm disappointed. Unfortunately I know my best time would have done it."

Men's 200 m Butterfly

Tom Malchow of the USA won the final in a new Olympic record, ahead of the Russian Federation's Denys Sylant'yev and Australia's Justin Norris.

Women's 200 m Individual Medley

Yana Klochkova from Ukraine achieved a rare medley double when she won the 200 m individual medley in Olympic record time. Beatrice Caslaru of Romania and Cristina Teuscher of the USA won the silver and bronze medals respectively.

Men's 200 m Individual Medley

Italian Massimiliano Rosolino added a gold medal to his two freestyle medals when he won the 200 m individual medley. In the process he relegated Tom Dolan of the USA, the winner of the 400 m individual medley, to second place. Another American, Tom Wilkens, was third.

Women's 400 m Individual Medley

Eighteen-year-old Yana Klochkova won Ukraine's first ever swimming medal with a gold in the women's 400 m individual medley. Her time of 4:33.59 bettered the world record of

China's Yan Chen, who had failed to make the final. Silver and bronze went to Yasuko Tajimo of Japan and Beatrice Caslaru of Romania respectively.

Men's 400 m Individual Medley

Defending champion Tom Dolan of the USA dominated the men's 400 m individual medley, breaking his own world record to secure the gold. He clocked 4:11.76 to defeat team-mate Erik Vendt in 4:14.23 and Canada's Curtis Myden in 4:15.33.

Women's 4 x 100 m Freestyle Relay

The American women's 4 x 100 m team won their relay comfortably, defeating the Netherlands and Sweden. The foursome of Amy van Dyken, Dara Torres, Courtney Shealy and Jenny Thompson posted a new world record of 3:36.61, previously set by China in 1994 at 3:37.91.



19

BILLY STICKLAND/ALLSPORT



18

JAMIE SOURE/ALLSPORT

17. Susie O'Neill gives her best in her last Olympic butterfly swim

18. Misty Hyman (left) cannot believe her victory in the 200 m butterfly. Teammate Kaitlin Sandeno shares in the celebration

19. Tom Dolan yells out his satisfaction after setting a new world record and winning the gold medal in the 400 m individual medley

20



AL BELLOALSPORT

Men's 4 x 100 m Freestyle Relay

The men's 4 x 100 m freestyle relay provided a memorable climax to a dramatic first evening of competition. It was a classic confrontation between the USA, which had never lost this event at the Olympic Games, and a strong Australian team. Michael Klim gave Australia an initial advantage when he led off in world record time but the Americans closed the gap so that Ian Thorpe, the final Australian swimmer, dived in a fraction ahead of sprint specialist Gary Hall Jr. It was an epic struggle. Thorpe had won the 400 m freestyle less than one hour before. Hall had boasted the US team would smash the Australians 'like guitars'. And indeed, Hall had established a clear lead with 50 m to go. But Thorpe fought back courageously to win by 0.19 seconds in world record time. Brazil won the bronze, achieving its first relay medal since 1980.

21



NICK WILSONSPORT

Women's 4 x 200 m Freestyle Relay

The fancied US team won the 4 x 200 m freestyle relay, with Australia second and Germany third. Jenny Thompson, a relay specialist, won her second gold medal of the Games, her seventh gold medal in three Olympic Games. The relay was tightly contested between Australia and the USA, with nothing separating the final swimmers. Thompson was the last American in the pool. "It was nerve-racking going last because the race was neck-and-neck the whole way, but I had faith in myself," Thompson said. "This is pretty sweet."

Men's 4 x 200 m Freestyle Relay

With Ian Thorpe and Michael Klim leading off, followed by Todd Pearson and William Kirby, Australia established a commanding lead in the 4 x 200 m freestyle relay, which they won comfortably in world record time, with the USA and the Netherlands taking silver and bronze respectively.

Women's 4 x 100 m Medley Relay

The USA showed their strength as the top swimming nation, winning the women's 4 x 100 m medley relay and smashing the world record. Jenny Thompson achieved her third relay gold medal and brought her Olympic gold medal total to eight. Australia was second with Japan third.

Men's 4 x 100 m Medley Relay

The swimming competition concluded with the US team setting a world record in winning the 4 x 100 m medley relay. Australia won silver and Germany bronze.

After the rush of five world records on the first evening, eight more were set over the next seven days, while the Olympic record was lowered on 25 occasions. All in all, the swimming competition in Sydney was a tremendous success, and those who witnessed the events will cherish the memories for a long time.

20. After a heart-stopping 4 x 100 m freestyle relay race Ashley Callus, Chris Fydler, Michael Klim and Ian Thorpe (left to right) celebrate their victory. Australia's win marks the first time in Olympic history the USA were defeated in this event

21. Team effort: Samantha Arsenault, Diana Munz, Lindsay Benko and Jenny Thompson after their win in the 4 x 200 m freestyle relay

22. After a successful and exciting swimming competition, the Australian team thanks the crowds for their incessant support

22



NICK WILSONSPORT



AQUATICS: WATER POLO

Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre, Ryde

Sydney International Aquatics Centre, Sydney Olympic Park

16 September–1 October 2000

It wasn't that long ago that a group of fit young women in swimsuits brandished placards at Sydney airport to lobby for the inclusion of women's water polo in the 2000 Olympic Games. Although water polo was one of the first team events of the modern Olympic Games, introduced in Paris in 1900, at the 1996 Games women were still not eligible to compete. Finally, dedication to their dream saw it become a reality in Sydney, when women's water polo made its Olympic debut on September 16 with a six-nation field.

With seven players per side, the aim of water polo is to throw the ball into the opponent's goal at the opposite end. But simple it is not, as both male and female players can swim the equivalent of 1500 m in each game, unable to touch the bottom of the pool for a rest. And, in action not always obvious to the referees, underwater cameras in the pool at Sydney gave a perspective of the roughness under the water as players wrestled each other for position and possession.

The battles in the pool attracted the most spectators in Australian water polo history. The men played in a 30 m pool and the women in a 25 m pool.

Women's Competition

The first match of the women's competition was held at the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre, Australia defeating Kazakhstan 9–2 in a toughly contested physical battle. After being overcome by tears when entering the pool area to the roar of the local supporters, the Australian captain, Bridgette Gusterson, regained her composure to fire in three goals for the home side.

The following day, during the Australia versus the Russian Federation game, ten contestants had their swimming costumes ripped to shreds in an even more physical game. After the preliminary matches, with crowds in the vicinity of 5000, teams from Canada and Kazakhstan were relegated to the spectator stands as the Netherlands and the Russian Federation played off for bronze at the Sydney International Aquatic Centre. There, an audience of 17 000 witnessed history in the making for the first ever medal play-off for women's water polo.

Disappointment doused the confidence of current world champions, the Netherlands, when they were defeated 4–3 by the Russian Federation, who took the bronze medal. The winning goal was scored with only 1:21 to go in a thrilling finish. No one present could guess that an even more exciting last-minute finish was to come in the gold medal play-off between Australia and the USA.



24



STEVE BACCINIFAIRFAX

capacity crowd exploded, nearly lifting the roof off the pool. Even Australia's normally calm Prime Minister added to the cheers. Although the Americans initially protested the goal, they were magnanimous in defeat as the Australians celebrated with rapturous joy in the water before joining their coach and team-mates on the side of the pool. It wasn't long until everyone, including the fully clad coach, was thrown in the water, as fans in the stands, many dressed in green and gold wigs, sang 'Waltzing Matilda', sounding as if they were underwater themselves.

Goalkeeper Liz Weekes claimed the massive energy of the crowd carried the home team to victory, although Debbie Watson confessed she was somewhat concerned for her father, who was recovering from triple bypass surgery, as he jumped up and down like a kid at poolside. More than one player commented that it was a dream come true.

Since Hungary had been a dominant force in men's water polo for many years, and Australia is a multicultural nation, it was not inappropriate that Australia had a Hungarian coach, Istvan Gorgenyi, who commented in faltering English, "The girls made a miracle happen with their hearts."

Men's Competition

On the day of the women's finals at the Sydney Aquatic Centre, the men started their competition at Ryde Aquatic Centre, with two groups competing in toughly fought preliminary rounds.

Twelve teams, representing Hungary, Greece, Slovakia, Italy, Spain, Croatia, the USA, Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Australia and Kazakhstan, each played five matches. Eight teams (Hungary, Italy, Spain, Croatia, the USA, Yugoslavia, the Russian Federation and Australia) contested the quarterfinals, with the Russian Federation, Spain, Hungary and Yugoslavia making it through to the semifinals.

The bronze medal match featured two past championship teams, Spain and Yugoslavia. But Spain was unable to defend its 1996 gold medal, losing to Yugoslavia 8-3. It was likely to be the last match for Spanish legend Manuel Estiarte, competing in his sixth Games. In tears, he commented, "When I was young, I never imagined I would achieve so much and go through so many emotions."

Surprisingly, at the medal play-offs on October 1, it wasn't a sell-out crowd like the women's match, but the enthusiasm of fans made up for the 80 per cent capacity in the stands during one of the last events before the Closing Ceremony. Hungary and the Russian Federation had competed in opposite preliminary groups and faced each other for the first time in the gold medal game.

Colourful flags of every nation flew over the pool but in the stands a sea of the red, white and green flags of Hungary waved. There are 40 000 Hungarians now resident in Sydney as one of the many multicultural communities which make up the host nation. It wasn't surprising to hear enthusiastic chants which translated into, "Hungarians – it was nice, guys."

25



HAMISH BLAIR/ALLSPORT

There were enthusiastic cheers for all teams. However, in this, the moment that all were waiting for, there was no doubt the Australians would enjoy a home-crowd advantage. Decibel levels from the patriotic crowd rose out of all proportion long before the host nation's team even entered the water.

Although Australia won the first swim-off to gain a psychological advantage, the USA was first to strike a goal for gold after 2:57, when Brenda Villa hit the mark. At the end of the first of the four seven-minute periods, the score was tied at 1-1, with the USA regaining a 2-1 lead at half time as the teams changed ends of the pool. The game was again tied 2-2, at the end of the third quarter in a toughly fought defensive tussle.

The Australians took the lead for the first time with only 82 seconds left and then the USA levelled the game with only 26 seconds on the clock. With only a second to go, Yvette Higgins fired the ball through the hands of two American defenders and into the net to score the winning goal. Four of Australia's 25 shots at goal hit the mark while the USA managed only three of 17.

In what was arguably the most emotional moment in the Aquatic Centre over the duration of the Olympic Games, the

26



HAMISH BLAIR/ALLSPORT

- 23. Previous page:
The Australian women's team during their match against Kazakhstan
- 24. Russian goalkeeper Marina Akobia attempts to block a pass from the Netherlands during the bronze medal match
- 25. US coach Guy William Baker talks tactics during the women's final against Australia
- 26. For the Australian women's team, the Games ended with a gold medal and a dream come true

In a fiercely physical game, the only obvious damage was to bathing costumes, with two players emerging from the water with their uniforms in tatters. However, as Dutch player Bas de Jong had explained earlier in the tournament, "All the players do everything to win." And 'everything' included kicking, hitting and grabbing. De Jong also commented, "I've played a lot of big tournaments and never seen violence this bad underwater."

There was some debate in the media as to whether the underwater cameras were a good thing for the sport, giving spectators a view of the violence which often goes undetected by the referees.

In the 48th and final match of the water polo competition, the physical nature of the game was understandably intense as Hungary convincingly defeated the Russian Federation 13–6 to claim its seventh Olympic men's water polo gold medal.

From the first swim-off for possession, Hungary was determined for more goals, shooting 26 times for 13 goals, while an attacking Russian Federation was starved of scoring, when only six of their 30 attacks on goal hit the mark.

Tibor Benedek of Hungary scored the opening goal at 1:53 and went on to be the game's top scorer with four goals. Hungary extended its 3–1 quarter-time lead to 8–2 at half time and never looked back, with the coach giving bench players a chance to participate in the win at the two-minute mark, substituting two of the stars. As one of the Hungarian fans commented, "In Hungary, we have great players and greater players."



27

ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP PHOTO

Aquatics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



27. Greece's Konstantinos Loudis takes aim during a preliminary match against Yugoslavia. Greece was defeated 10-3

28. Emotions were running high during the quarterfinal match between Italy and Hungary: Hungarian players urge on their team mates

29. The USA line up before a preliminary match against Yugoslavia

With a lengthy delay for the medal presentations, there was a good chance many of the athletes would be late for the Closing Ceremony. But judging from the joy on their faces, they couldn't have cared less and were busy enjoying the moment – the eighth gold medal of the Games for Hungary.

For a nation that historically has been a dominant force in water polo, it was Hungary's first Olympic medal since 1976, so it was little wonder that players remarked, "It was an unbelievable experience that we have been working toward for over 20 years."



28

ORLANDO CHIODI/FAIRFAX



29

DARREN ENGLAND/ALLSPORT



AQUATICS: SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING

Sydney International Aquatics Centre, Sydney Olympic Park
24–29 September 2000

Team Competition

It took Canadian Claire Carver-Dias and her team-mates thousands of practice sessions, a couple of black eyes and a case of concussion before they were ready to take their team free routine to Sydney. It had to be just right – perfect in routine, artistry, precision and grace.

The Canadians wanted to make a big impression. As the inventors of the sport of synchronized swimming, they were determined to break new ground: it wasn't enough for it to be 'right'; they wanted it to be daring and original. As they lined up at the poolside the crowd could sense something different. Instead of the usual extravagant costumes, they had chosen simple suits that resembled track uniforms. They wore little make-up, with their hair hidden under swimming caps.

Then, to the soundtrack of *Chariots of Fire*, they began a routine that paid tribute to a smorgasbord of Olympic sports. Instead of a traditional sequence, they performed an energetic, perfectly synchronized montage of hurdling, high-jumping, gymnastics, taekwondo and archery, assaulting tradition and seizing the imagination. Suddenly, in a feat of tremendous strength and teamwork, there was Carver-Dias elevated high above the water. Resting her slight 118-pound body on team-mate Catherine Garceau's foot, as if it were a bicycle seat, she assumed a hunched-over-the-handlebars position.

The crowd roared in appreciation as she cycled furiously, securing her team the bronze medal, with a score of 97.357, keeping Canada's unbroken string of synchro medals since the sport's inclusion in the Games in 1984, and making all the black eyes and concussion worthwhile. Entering the final phase of competition, in third place and with 65 per cent of their score in the balance, the Canadians had needed to complete a near-perfect routine to maintain their position.

One panel of judges assessed their technical merit including execution, degree of difficulty and synchronization. Another judged their artistic ability, including variety, creativity, fluidity and mood. A camera running across the top of the pool on tracks gave judges and spectators alike the overhead visuals while 19 underwater viewing windows and a camera located on the pool floor provided the underwater shots.

Earlier in the week, at Sydney International Aquatic Centre, eight nations had competed the team technical routine. Worth 35 per cent of the overall score, each team of nine had performed a routine that had included 11 elements set to music within a time limit.

31



TIMOTHY A. CLARKE/AFIP

For Canada, it had been successful – they had shaken up the status quo. For the Russian Federation it was to be more so. Before they entered the team free competition, they scored 98.80 in the team technical routine. Performing to 'Night on the Bare Mountain', their witch-themed freestyle routine was the epitome of harmony and perfection, mesmerising the crowd and earning them two perfect 10s for technical marks and two more for artistic impression. "We wanted to make it very visual, including the swimsuits and hairstyles," remarked team member Maria Kisseleva. "I believe it was a masterpiece. If it was not a masterpiece we would not have won gold."

Japan won the silver medal. To the chanting of "Nippon" from their team-mates, their winning routine, titled "The Bird of Wonder", consisted of faultless spins and acrobatic height, earning them one 10 for technique and four 10s for artistic impression in their free routine. "We have never had 10s before," said Japanese coach Miya Tachinana modestly.

But perhaps one of the greatest shocks came to the USA. Along with Canada and Japan, they had dominated this sport. However, the six-day competition in Week 2 of the Games changed all that. They failed to win a medal. Japan took two medals and France and Canada one each. Meanwhile, the Russian Federation, which came into this Games as the world champions, won not only the team event but the duet as well.

Duet Competition

The duet competition took part earlier in the week. Twenty-four teams competed in the technical and free routines. Like the team format, the routines were performed to music within a time limit. Each duet team was required to execute nine elements and the objective was to be technically and artistically proficient while at the same time being in perfect synchronisation.

If spectators were amazed at how alike the swimmers were, this was because three pairs of athletes were actually twins. Slovakia, Brazil and Egypt all had twins competing, who believed they had an advantage as they were able to read

their partner's mind and improve their skills at the same pace. Nevertheless, twin-sets were not in the medal rankings.

The supporters for Miya Tachibana and Miho Takeda from Japan waved their flags vigorously and applauded with polite rhythmic clapping. After the technical routine Tachibana said, "The crowd helped us but in other ways I felt quite scared of them." Nevertheless, the Japanese competitors retained their composure and responded to the crowd, winning the silver medal with a total score of 98.650 points.

Coming in third place was the French team of Virginie Dedieu and Myriam Lignot, with a total score of 97.437. But no one could outstrip the power of the Russian Federation duet, Olga Brusnikina and Maria Kisseleva. After a traditional display, executed with precision timing and performed to the rhythmic accompaniment of Japanese drums, the judges awarded them the maximum 65 points, giving them an overall score of 99.580 points, securing them the gold medal.

But what of the Canadians and their ground-breaking routine? For them, the risk of being unconventional hadn't won them gold. Yet questions born from their daring included, "Will other teams dare to change their routine, veto the sequins and go for a more athletic approach?"

Canadian team-member Reidun Tatham thinks they will. "Things have changed in our sport. The way the sport is evolving – from patterns to aerobics, it makes you wonder what it going to happen to it four years from now. We are not afraid of change. And we are not afraid of risk."

Aquatics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



30. Opposite page:

Tuesday Middaugh of the USA performs during the duet free routine final.

Middaugh and partner Anna Kozlova placed fourth in the final ranking

31. The Canadian team practise their innovative free routine which caused a stir during the competition. Inspired by Olympic sports and choreographed to Vangelis' 'Chariots of Fire', the performance was greeted with cheers

32. Olga Brusnikina is lifted out of the water during Russia's gold medal performance in the team free routine. With the duet and team gold medal, Russia has established itself as the new dominating force in the sport

32



SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT





ARCHERY

**Sydney International Archery Park, Sydney Olympic Park
16–22 September 2000**

Magnus Petersson, the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games silver medallist, had said before the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, "Archery is always kind of the same, it is your own pressure that makes it hard. The biggest problem for a lot of archers is that they don't focus on what they are doing. They focus on the targets and their hits on the targets, which are 70 m away. Once you take the focus off yourself – your body and technique – and put it away 70 metres, then the body does not perform as well because you are not there. Your mind and body are not together."

The other archers must have paid attention to his advice as, on the first day of the men's elimination competition, the 1/32 round in which the number of contestants was halved from 64 to 32, there was record scoring. In the first round of the day Australian Simon Fairweather equalled the Olympic record for 18 arrows, with a score of 170 out of a possible 180, when he defeated Juan Carlos Stevens of Cuba. Fairweather's record lasted 1.2 seconds before it was bettered by Jocelyn de Grandis of France, who scored 171 to defeat Iouri Leontiev of the Russian Federation. The record lasted only another three hours before Korean Jang Yong-Ho scored 172 in a one-sided contest against Kuresa Tupua, of American Samoa.

More records fell on the following days. Yun Mi-Jin of Korea bettered the Olympic record by five points when she shot 173 in the women's 1/8 elimination round. The men's Olympic team record of 253 was equaled by Turkey in the 1/8 eliminations. In the quarterfinals, it was bettered by the USA, 255, and then further extended by Korea, 258. The combined total of 1994 shot by the Korean women for the qualifying round, 216 arrows, broke the existing world record of 1984.

Records were more difficult to achieve during afternoons when the wind picked up and archers had to contend with tricky cross-breezes. Since the finals were decided in the late afternoon, the archers who succeeded were those who could best adapt to the changed circumstances.

Venue

Sydney International Archery Park was located at a unique and attractive 6.5 ha site in Millennium Parklands, adjacent to the wetlands of Homebush Bay. The A\$3 million complex was opened in July 1998. The targets were framed by extensive groves of mangroves and from the Park there were fine panoramic views of the Olympic Stadium, including the lit cauldron. The stands had seating for 3500. The venue featured two pole forests, made from 185 recycled electricity poles. The forests symbolised the historical links of archery

with places such as Sherwood Forest, home of mythical archers Robin Hood and his Merry Men.

Competition

The first day of archery was set aside for determining rankings for the competition proper on the following days. Sixty-two men from 32 countries and 66 women from 34 countries each shot 72 arrows at 12 ends to determine the seedings for the elimination rounds.

Women's Individual

There were surprises in the early elimination rounds when many of the favoured archers were defeated. In the 1/8 round Kim Nam-Soon of Korea beat world No.2 ranked He Ying of China, and Yun Mi-Jin of Korea disposed of world No.3 Alison Williamson of Great Britain. World No.4 ranked Karen Scavotto of the USA was defeated by Sayoko Kawauchi of Japan by 159 to 157. The quarterfinals saw the departure of world No.8 Natalia Bolotova of the Russian Federation, Sayoko Kawauchi of Japan, Natalia Valeeva of Italy and Joanna Nowicka of Poland.

As a result there were all-Korean semifinals; the three members of the Korean team were joined by Choe Ok Sil, the only representative from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). Ranked only 144 in the world, she was a surprise survivor to this round. However, Choe Ok Sil was defeated 114–107 in the semifinals by Kim Nam-Soon, who equalled the Olympic record of 114 points for 12 arrows.

The gold medallist was the 17-year-old Korean schoolgirl Yun Mi-Jin. She showed great poise to win both the semifinal and the final by narrow margins in the difficult windy conditions.



OLIVIER MORIN/AFP

Archery
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Competitors line up during the women's individual ranking on the first day of competition
2. A target during the men's individual ranking round
3. Nataliya Burdeyna of Ukraine (left), Karen Scavotto of the USA (centre) and Turkey's Natalia Nasaridze check their hits after the women's ranking round



2

DARREN MONAGHAN/SPORT

3



She beat her more experienced compatriot, 29-year-old Kim Soo-Nyung, by 107–105 in the semifinal. Kim had come out of retirement to compete in these Games. Considered by many to be the greatest female archer of all time, her bronze medal in this event added to her previous Olympic tally of three gold and one silver.

In the final Yun secured a one-point lead against Kim Nam-Soon, which she maintained to the end, winning a close contest by 107 to 106. She needed to score nine points with her final arrow and said afterwards, "When I was doing the last shot, I left it to God." The bronze medal was won by the third Korean, Kim Soo-Nyung, though her North Korean opponent fought courageously to lose by only 101 to 103. This contest was also decided on the final arrow.

4. Korea's Kim Nam-Soon takes aim during the women's individual competition. In addition to the silver in this event, she won a gold medal in the team competition

5. Simon Fairweather wins Australia's first archery gold medal in front of a wildly excited home crowd



The clean sweep by the Korean women repeated their country women's achievement of 1988 and was the first time since then that the athletes of one NOC have taken all three medals in the individual competition. Their feat was all the more surprising given the Koreans' world rankings of 65, 67 and 28 coming into Sydney.

Men's Individual

Seedings and rankings mattered little in the men's individual competition, where upsets were the order of the day and some of the favoured athletes exited at an early stage. World ranked No.2 Lionel Torres of France was defeated in the first elimination round by Christian Stubbe of Germany and world ranked No.1 Michele Frangilli of Italy was defeated by Kim Chung-Tae of Korea in the 1/8 elimination round.

However, the biggest surprise was that none of the favoured Korean men progressed to the semifinals, leaving relative outsiders Wietse Van Alten of the Netherlands, Victor Wunderle of the USA, Simon Fairweather of Australia and Magnus Petersson of Sweden to contest the medals.

Thirty-year-old Simon Fairweather, ranked 29 in the world, shot with great consistency throughout the day. He defeated Wunderle in the gold medal decider by 113 to 106, becoming the first Australian to medal in archery. At his fourth Olympic Games Fairweather finally fulfilled the promise he had shown in 1991, when he won the world target championship at Krakow in Poland. Fairweather attributed his improvement to his Korean coach, Lee Ki-Sik, who was brought to the Australian Institute of Sport as part of the Olympic Athlete Program. "He has completely changed my attitude and my technique. He's pretty much a member of my family," Fairweather said.

Wunderle had reached the final by defeating Petersson by 108 to 107 in the semifinal. Van Alten of the Netherlands defeated Petersson, by 114 to 109, to win the bronze medal.

Team Events

There were 26 teams. The 14 men's teams came from Korea, the USA, Kazakhstan, Turkey, the Netherlands, Italy, Sweden, People's Republic of China, Ukraine, Australia, France, Russian Federation, Japan and Norway. The 12 women's teams came from Korea, Ukraine, Chinese Taipei, People's Republic of China, Germany, Turkey, Italy, Sweden, the USA, Australia, Poland and Georgia. The competitions were held following the individual events. There were four elimination rounds, culminating in the gold medal matches. Each team of three archers shot 27 arrows from three ends. The format of competition was similar to that of Atlanta in 1996 but was extended from one to two days.

Women's Team

The Korean team of Kim Soo-Nyung, Kim Nam-Soon and Yun Mi-Jin were ranked fourth in the world, but were hot favourites to win the team event because of their performances in the individual event and because of historical precedent. Korea had won at every Olympic Games since 1988, when the team



JUDA NGWENYA/REUTERS

competition, defeating the world champion Italian team by 255–247 in the 27-arrow final. The Koreans were just one point ahead going into the final nine arrows, but then scored 87 out of a possible 90, six 10s and three 9s. They had demonstrated their good form when they beat Ukraine in a quarterfinal, achieving a score of 258. This broke the Olympic record of 253, set by Australia at Atlanta.

The USA posted an impressive score, defeating Sweden in their quarterfinal by 255 to 244, but was beaten in the semifinals by Italy 244 to 241. The Americans, however, won the bronze medal in a close match against the Russian Federation. The match was tied at 239 after 27 arrows but the USA won in a shoot-out, by 29 to 26, when each archer shot an arrow in rotation.

competition was established. In the quarterfinals Korea scored six successive 10s to open up an 87 to 80 break against the USA and won by 252 to 240, eclipsing the Olympic record of 249 they had set in Atlanta.

In the gold medal match the Koreans led their Ukrainian rivals by five points with six arrows to go, but then established a 12-point buffer to win comfortably by 251 to 239. Their combined total of 502, for the semifinals and final, created a world record. Germany upset the world No.1 ranked team, Turkey, to win the bronze by 240 to 234 points.

Men's Team

The Korean team of Jang Yong-Ho, Oh Kyo-Moon and Kim Chung-Tae made up for their disappointment in the individual

Korea, with three gold medals, one silver and one bronze, dominated the tournament. It was their best result since the Seoul Games of 1988 when the nation won three gold medals, two silver and one bronze. The Koreans' training had combined the traditional eastern practices of meditation and mind control with the scientific and technical methods of the western world. In a nation where archery is widely practised the Korean archers returned as heroes.

For host nation Australia, the gold medal in the men's individual event was a wonderful outcome which was greeted with much enthusiasm. Australia had expected to medal in the men's team event, as every host nation had won this event since it was introduced to the Olympic schedule. It was not to be, but the nation had a new Olympic hero and a wonderful venue for aspiring archers.

Archery Volume Two Chapter Five



6. Sharing a laugh during the all-Korean medal ceremony for the women's individual competition: Yun Mi-Jin (centre), Kim Nam-Soon (right) and Kim Soo-Nyung

7. Detail of a bow during the women's individual competition

8. Korea, Italy and the USA on the dais after the men's team competition



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DARREN MCNAMARALLSPORT





ATHLETICS

Olympic Stadium, Sydney Olympic Park
22 September–1 October 2000

The Nike ad said it all: "Four hundred metres is not very far. You run that distance to catch a bus. You probably walk further in a supermarket. Certainly when you walk the dog, the distance is greater. But will a nation hold its breath when you do it?" Australia held its breath while Cathy Freeman ran and won her final in the Olympic Stadium on Monday 25 September 2000. The stadium erupted. The noise was deafening. "Maybe the longest standing ovation in sports history," wrote Bill Plaschke in the *Los Angeles Times*.

Freeman ran with the weight of a nation on her slender shoulders. It took just under 50 seconds for her to fulfil the destiny Australians had craved for her and themselves. Her win was a symbolic victory in many ways. For starters, it was Australia's 100th Olympic gold medal since Edwin Flack won the country's first in 1896.

Betty Cuthbert, still a national hero, had won the same event in 1964, 36 years earlier. Freeman, an Aboriginal Australian, was the first of her race to win an individual Olympic gold medal. She certainly reached deep into Australia's soul and conscience. For many Australians Freeman's win was a tangible step towards Reconciliation, unifying everyone.

It wasn't easy for Freeman in the lead up to the Games. The 400 m was described as 'Cathy's final' well before she had even stepped onto the track, let alone run the rounds to qualify. Tickets for the 400 m final were an immediate sell-out. The nation wanted to see her win the gold medal. She was the favourite and Australia's only true gold medal prospect on the track.

Freeman's first exposure to the Olympic Games came via television. She remembers seeing Carl Lewis run into history at Los Angeles in 1984 and setting her heart on following him. She was still just a teenager when she told her school guidance officer that when she grew up she wanted to be an Olympic champion.

After her victory she would acknowledge the nation's *expectation* and the energy of the audience willing her to win. "It was unbelievable. Before the race started I could feel the vibrations through my body." Cries of "Cathy! Cathy! Cathy!" rang around the stadium as she walked a barefoot victory lap while clutching two flags, the Australian flag and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag.

The lead up to the final was dramatic. Freeman's arch rival, Marie-Jose Percec, dual gold medallist in this event from previous Games, had fled Sydney in sensational and still unexplained circumstances.

Spectators, waving flags and dressed in the national colours of many nations, revelled in the wonderful atmosphere of the Olympic Stadium. The days were warm, the nights balmy and the athletics spectacular.

The competition was held over ten days and included 46 medal events, 24 for men, 22 for women. There were two new events, both for women – the pole vault and the hammer throw. With day and evening sessions, a total of 1.6 million spectators enjoyed the athletics competition. A record number of 112 524 watched that unforgettable night with Cathy's run, Michael Johnson winning back-to-back gold medals and the distance races going down to the wire.

Men's 100 m

The ever hotly contested 100 m is always one to watch. Egos abounded as all the big-name sprinters lined up to take their place in Olympic history—Greene, Boldon, Drummond, Surin and Bailey.

The early rounds of the men's sprint saw the elimination of Donovan Bailey, the 1996 Olympic champion from Canada. He was obviously not fit and carrying an injury. Not the others! Times got faster as the rounds progressed. Maurice Greene of the USA announced after the semifinals: "Playtime is over ... it's time now to get serious."

Greene, favourite for the event with a season best of 9.86 seconds, had to deal with the knowledge that at the last two Games the favourites in this event were beaten. However, despite obvious nervousness, he overcame this hoodoo and

Athletics
 Volume Two
 Chapter Five



1. All eyes were on Cathy Freeman at the start of the women's 400 m final
2. On a rain soaked track, Cathy Freeman leads Sandi Richards in the 400 m semifinal
3. Freeman, relaxed after her victory



2

LAURA BAUCHAP PHOTO



3

NICK WILSON/ALLSPORT

Athletics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



TIMOTHY CLARY/AP

his opponents to win in a convincing 9.87 seconds. Ato Boldon, the Trinidad sprinter and Greene's training partner, had a brilliant start, but was overtaken by Greene. Obadele Thompson of Barbados finished third.

Greene was acclaimed by the capacity crowd and, after throwing one of his shoes into the crowd, took a victory lap with the Stars and Stripes flag draped over his shoulders.

Women's 100 m

The women's 100 m was never in doubt after Marion Jones of the USA demonstrated her speed and power in the early rounds. Her victory was decisive and expected. She won by three metres – the biggest margin in Olympic history since Australian Marjorie Jackson's win in Helsinki in 1952. Jones's time of 10.75 seconds in cool conditions and into a head wind (-0.4 metres/sec) was a season best. Ekaterini Thanou of Greece was a surprising second and Jamaica's Tanya Lawrence crossed the line third – just edging out her 41-year-old countrywoman, Merlene Ottey, who was thus temporarily denied an eighth Olympic medal in a stellar

track career that began in Moscow in 1980 – twenty years before. For Jones, though, it was her 34th consecutive 100 m final win. She was clearly unbeatable and, like Greene, took a victory lap acknowledging her popularity with the crowd.

Men's 200 m

In a race usually dominated by the USA, the men's 200 m was won by Greece's Konstantinos Kenteris in 20.09 seconds. Greece's last male gold medallist was Spyridon Louis, who won the marathon at the 1896 Olympic Games in Athens. Kenteris ran into history by defeating Darren Campbell of Great Britain and Ato Bolden of Trinidad with the USA's Coby Miller and John Capel Jr finishing seventh and eighth.

Women's 200 m

From the gun it was Marion Jones of the USA all the way, adding another gold to her 100 m medal. She ran a season's best of 21.84 to beat the veteran Pauline Davis-Thompson of the Bahamas, who ran a personal best of 22.27. Setting a Sri Lankan national record and winning a bronze medal was Susanthika Jayasinghe.

Men's 400 m

In the men's 400 m the star of Atlanta, Michael Johnson, sought to defend his title against rising young American Alvin Harrison. As expected, Johnson was the first athlete to win back-to-back 400 m at the Olympic Games. The 33-year-old ran a controlled race in lane six, watching his young opponent and other contenders on the giant stadium screen as he constructed a perfect race. Johnson was first in 43.84, Harrison second and Greg Haughton from Jamaica third. Johnson, by winning his fourth gold medal, equalled the four of Jesse Owens in 1936. Later he would add a fifth for the 4 x 400 m relay.



MIKE POWELL/SPORT

4. The fastest man in the world: Maurice Greene, world champion and world record holder, wins the 100 m final
5. Konstantinos Kenteris thrilled his home country, Greece, with his surprise victory in the men's 200 m
6. Marion Jones' victory in the 100 m final continued US domination of this event

5



AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Women's 400 m

Cathy Freeman won the women's 400 m final in the time of 49.11, her best of the season. Second was Lorraine Graham of Jamaica who ran 49.58, and third Katharine Merry of Great Britain, in 49.72. Both the silver and bronze medallists achieved personal best times.

Men's 800 m

World record holder Wilson Kipketer of Denmark was expected to win the men's 800 m but ran far back for too long and just failed to catch Germany's Nils Schumann. Reputations count for little at the Olympic Games and this was a classic example of the favourite making a mistake and paying the price. Schumann won in 1:45.08 with Kipketer just 0.06 seconds behind. Algeria's Aissa Djibir Said-Guerni was third.

Women's 800 m

As current 800 m world champion Maria Mutola took the line, more was hanging in the balance than a world title. She had won Mozambique's only Olympic medal, a bronze, in Atlanta four years ago. Now she had her sights set on the gold, not only for Mozambique but also for herself, after dominating the event for the past decade without an appropriate medal to show for it.

Threatening to upset this dream were Stephanie Graf of Austria and Kelly Holmes of Great Britain. On this day, the world champion was too powerful and Mutola won, taking the gold in emphatic style with a time of 1:56.15. Graf came second in a personal best of 1:56.64 and Holmes was third.

Men's 1500 m

There was another upset in the men's 1500 m. In the third lap Morocco's Hicham El Guerrouj, world champion and current world record holder, took the lead and ran for the finish followed by the Kenyans Noah Ngeny and Bernard Lagat. Seeking atonement for his fall at the Olympic Games in Atlanta four years earlier, El Guerrouj strained for gold. But in a dramatic end to a classic contest, Ngeny ran him down, winning the event in a time of 3:32.07 that broke Sebastian Coe's Olympic record set in 1984. Ngeny now joins the ranks of earlier Kenyan 1500 m legends – Kip Keino who won the metric mile (1500 m) in Mexico in 1968 and Peter Rono who won in Seoul in 1988.

Women's 1500 m

In a tactical race, the winner of the women's 5000 m, Romania's Gabriela Szabo, failed to achieve her Olympic dream of a double gold medal at these Games.

Szabo dodged a nasty fall, and dropped to the back of the pack. She kicked home strongly, and although she was gaining, she could not defeat Algeria's Nouria Merah-Benida who won in 4:05.10 from Romania's Violeta Szekely in 4:05.15, with Szabo third in 4:05.27.



7

Athletics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



NICK WILSON/SPORT



8

THOMAS MENZIE/AR PHOTO



9

STU FORSTER/SPORT

7. Michael Johnson, famous for his golden footwear, easily defended his 400 m gold medal
8. Maria Mutola (centre), the first African woman in Olympic history to win the women's 800 m, with Stefanie Graf (right) and Kelly Holmes
9. Hicham El Guerrouj sits pensively after gold eluded him again in the 1500 m final

Athletics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



Men's 5000 m

The men's 5000 m final saw an avalanche of African runners – 9 out of 15 starters – and all three precious medals went to that continent through Millon Wolde of Ethiopia in 13:35.49; Ali Saidi-Sief of Algeria in 13:36.20 and, very close behind, Brahim Lahlafi of Morocco in 13:36.47. A blanket could have covered the runners finishing four through six – from Ethiopia and Kenya.

Women's 5000 m

The women's 5000 m was another nail-biting finish in an exciting night of finals competition. The crowd was already wound-up from the home-town victory of Cathy Freeman in the 400 m and when Romanian Gabriela Szabo and Ireland's Sonia O'Sullivan battled out the final stages of the 5000 m the spectators again rose to their feet. Both athletes are renowned for their lightning fast finishes, but the tiny Romanian held off the taller O'Sullivan four times in the final 200 m to win in an Olympic record of 14:40.79 to 14:41.02. In hot pursuit was Ethiopia's Gete Wami, 14:42.23, placing third.

Men's 10 000 m

In what may be described as the most exciting race in history, the finish of the men's 10 000 m was closer than the final of the men's 100 m. It seems almost unbelievable that after running almost 10 000 m athletes could be separated by the slimmest of margins. As the athletes entered the straight for the final time it appeared the impossible was about to happen: Ethiopia's Haile Gebrselassie, the reigning Olympic 10 000 m champion, four-time world 10 000 m champion, and world record holder for the 10 000 m and 5000 m, might be beaten. Finally Kenya's Paul Tergat might overcome his nemesis. But Gebrselassie, with face drawn into a grimace, dug a little deeper and lunged across the line, beating Tergat 27:18.20 to 27:18.29. Third was Ethiopia's Assefa Mezgebu.

Women's 10 000 m

There was hardly a dry eye in the house when Great Britain's Paula Radcliff walked from the track after the women's 10 000 m. From the gun she had set a cracking pace in an attempt to take the finishing kick out of her opponents. 'Wise heads' among the vast audience predicted that she could not maintain this fast front position, but she did – lap after lap, her running style unorthodox but efficient. Then, after 8500 m, she was engulfed by three other runners. She hung on courageously, but the early pace had taken its toll, and she finished just out of the medals in fourth place.

Running a brilliant tactical race, Ethiopia's Derartu Tulu won in an Olympic record time of 30:17.49 from fellow countrywoman Gete Wami, with Portugal's Fernanda Ribeiro taking third position.

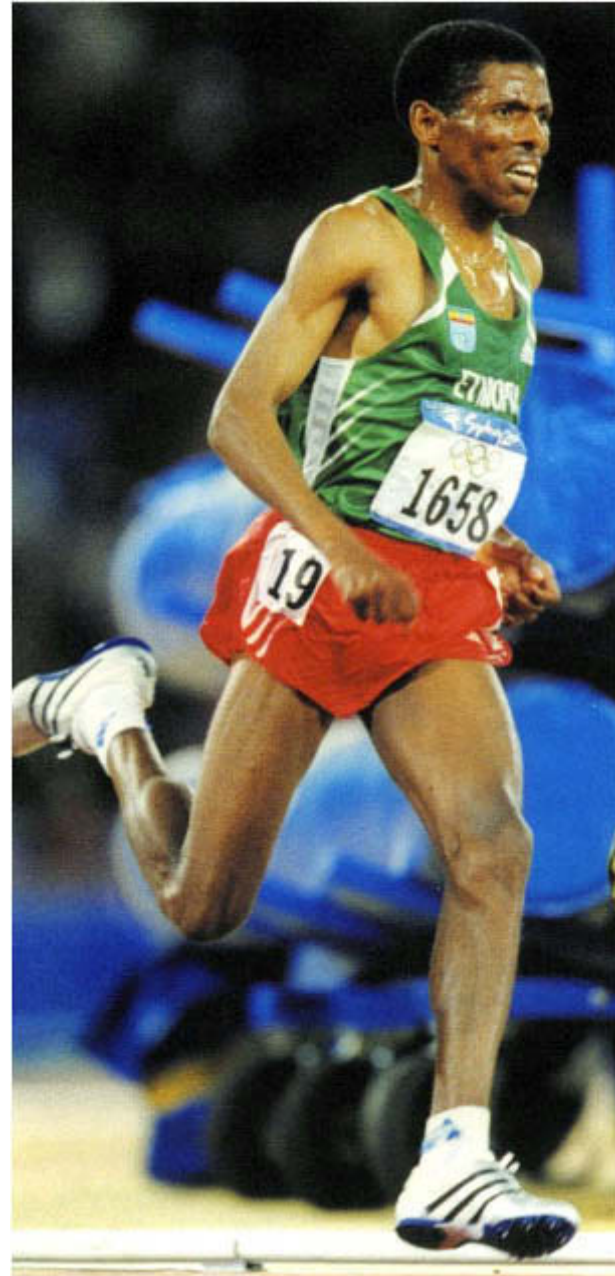
Men's Marathon

The last day of the Sydney 2000 Games saw a cool 21°C for the men's marathon, but blustery winds and a hilly second half of the race made the conditions particularly punishing. Botswana's Tiyapo Maso took up the front-running early for the first half of the race. At 30 km Ethiopian Gezahgne Abera worked his way into the lead, with the Kenyan Eric Wainaina and Ethiopia's Tesfaye Tola in hot pursuit. Abera maintained his lead, drawing away in the last kilometre to win in 2:10.11 from Wainaina in 2:10.31 and Tola in 2:11.10.

Women's Marathon

The marathon course was regarded by many as extremely difficult. The African women were race favourites, but there was also a lot of talk about a 27-year-old woman from Japan, Naoko Takahashi. In 1998 and 1999 she had run two extremely fast times of 2:21.47 and 2:22.09. She was fearless, and in Sydney she joined a group of elite runners who passed the 10 km mark in a little over 34 minutes. At 20 km, or nearly half-way, she led a small group of champions in 1:08.10 and never gave up that lead, winning in an Olympic best time of 2:23.14.

Lidia Simon of Romania, after losing contact with Takahashi between the 35 km and 40 km marks, closed rapidly, finishing



10. Heroic struggle: Paula Radcliffe has to yield the lead to Derartu Tulu and Gete Wami who went on to win gold and silver, respectively, in the women's 10 000 m race
11. In a repeat of the 10 000 m finish in Atlanta, legendary Haile Gebrselassie ran a tactical race to defeat his nemesis Paul Tergat

just eight seconds behind, running her last 3.2 km in under ten minutes. Joyce Chepchumba of Kenya, 2:24.45, won the bronze medal. All three placegetters bettered Joan Benoit's 1984 Olympic record. An amazing 41 women ran under three hours, and even more significantly, 14 – the greatest number ever at an Olympic Games – got under two-and-a-half hours on a tough course.

Men's 110 m Hurdles

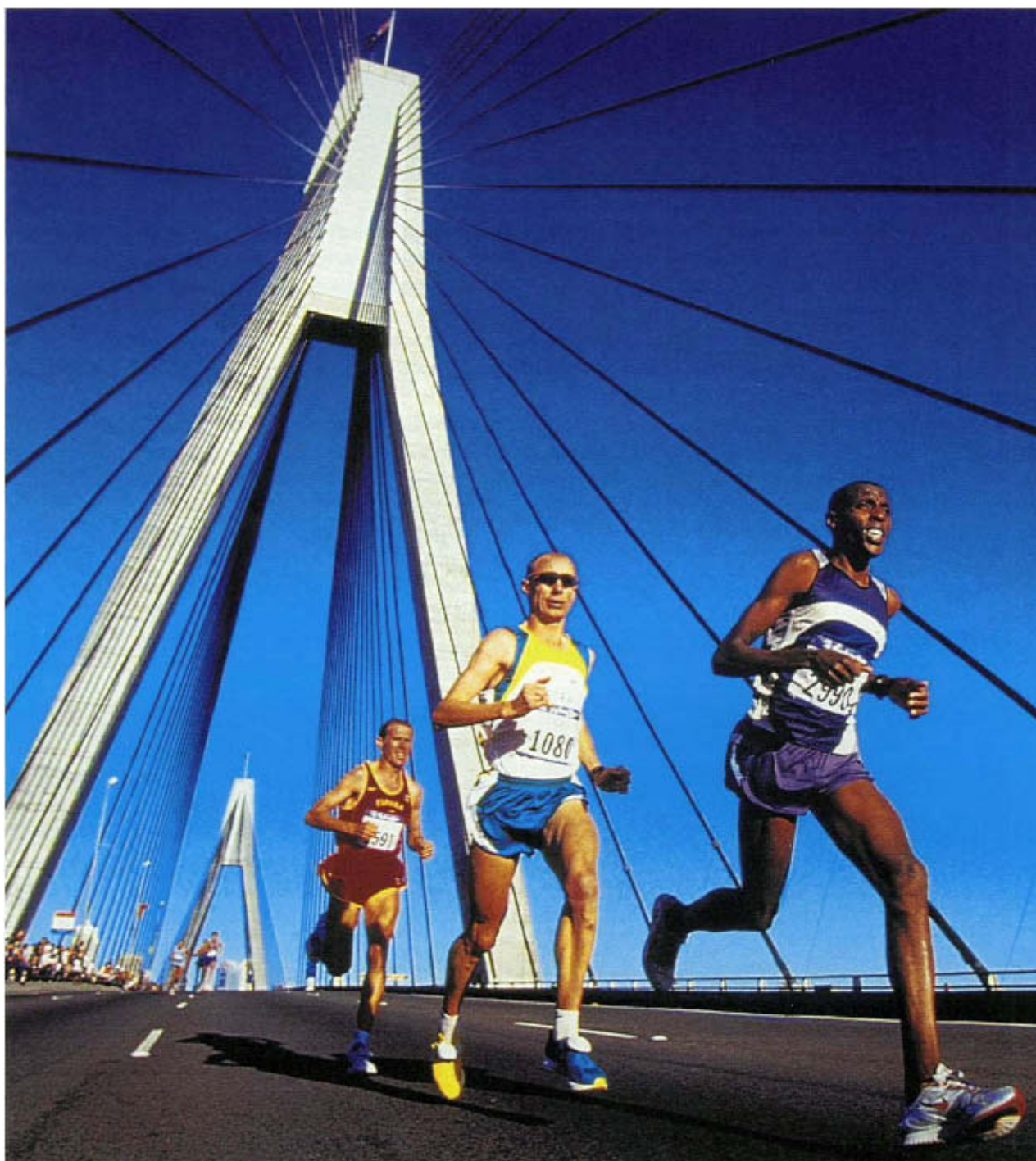
In was a star-studded field that lined up for the men's 110 m hurdles, with reigning Olympic champion Allen Johnson in lane five and world record holder Colin Jackson from Great Britain in lane one. But it was Cuba's Anier Garcia who flew out of the blocks and led from gun to tape, claiming the gold medal and establishing a new national record of 13.00. Closely behind Garcia was Terrence Trammell from the USA in 13.16 and Mark Crear, also from the USA, in 13.22.

Johnson and Jackson placed just out of the medals, finishing fourth and fifth respectively.

Women's 100 m Hurdles

The Sydney Games was to be the swan song of Gail Devers, the US athlete who won two Olympic gold medals, in 1992 and 1996, not in the hurdles, her specialist event, but in the 100 m. Devers, now 33, had spent 12 years trying to win this event. In Barcelona, she was leading in the final, hit the last hurdle and stumbled and fell before the finish line. In Sydney she had the fastest heat time but during the semifinals pulled a muscle and limped away from her last Olympic Games. She sat in the grandstands as the 1995 world championship silver medallist Olga Shishigina won gold for Kazakhstan's first Olympic Games athletics medal. Shishigina ran strongly over the final hurdle to defeat Glory Alozie of Nigeria by three hundredths of a second in 12.65,

Athletics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



13

MICHAEL STEELE/ALSPORT



12

GABRIEL BOUYS/AFP



14

LAURA RAUCH/AP PHOTO

12. A crowd of over 100 000 cheered for the marathon gold and bronze medallists, Gezahgne Abera (left) and Tesfaye Tola, both from Ethiopia

13. Mathias Ntawurikura of Rwanda leads Australian hope Steve Moneghetti, as the marathon runners cross the Anzac Bridge

14. Naoko Takahashi sets a new Olympic record as she crosses the finish line in the women's marathon

15



MICHAEL STEELE/SPORT

with Melissa Morrison of the USA third. Alozie dedicated her silver medal to her fiancée, who was killed by a car in Sydney just before the Games.

Men's 400 m Hurdles

As in the sprints, the USA has long dominated the hurdling events and it was little-known Angelo Taylor who helped his country continue this association. The 21-year-old ran the 400 m hurdles in a personal best of 47.5 seconds from the difficult inside lane to take the gold. Second was Hadi Souan Somayli of Kazakhstan and third Llewellyn Herbert of South Africa.

Taylor only realised just how precious the gold medal was well after the race. In a panic, he thought he had lost his gold medal after taking it to a Sydney discotheque to gain free admission. When he came out, he checked his pockets and the medal wasn't there. "I was feeling empty inside," he said.

"I thought I had lost it." He was bemoaning his loss to a team-mate on the way back to the Olympic village when he was told where his medal was – exactly where he'd left it: hanging around his neck!

Women's 400 m Hurdles

In contrast to Devers, a comparative novice won the gold medal in the women's 400 m hurdles, proving yet again that it will be the best athlete on the day that wins the gold. After just four top-level competitions in the event, the Russian Federation's former sprint star, Irina Privalova, beat Atlanta gold medallist Deon Hemmings of Jamaica in 53.02 seconds. Nouzha Bidouane of Morocco was third and 1999 world champion, Cuba's Daimi Pernia, was fourth.

3000 m Steeplechase

The 3000 m steeplechase is not contested by women, at least for the moment. Runners from African countries have dominated this event for more than a decade. And so it was on September 29, in a tactical rather than fast race, as three African runners sprinted away from the field. In first place was Reuben Kosgei from Kenya in 8:21.43. A stride behind in 8:21.77 was Wilson Boit Kipketer, also of Kenya, while Ali Ezzine, a North African from Morocco, took third in 8:22.15.

Men's High Jump

A Russian Federation athlete won the men's high jump – but it was not Vyacheslav Voronin as expected.

Voronin, the favourite, had the best performance for 2000 with a 2.40 m jump in London in August. However, it was world junior champion Sergey Kliugin who was best able to

16



STU FORSTER/SPORT

15. An ever-supportive crowd filled the Olympic Stadium during the athletics competition

16. Angelo Taylor prays after his win in the 400 m hurdles, while Pawel Januszewski congratulates him

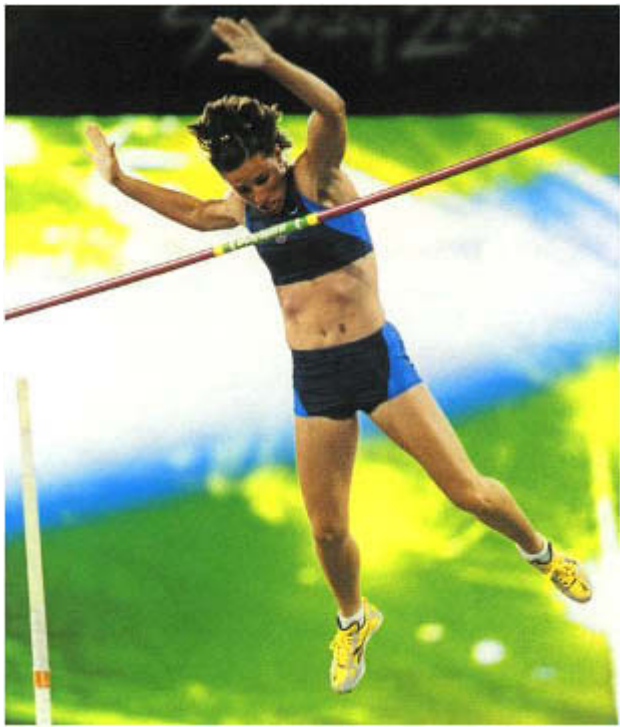
17. Kenya's Reuben Kosgei (right) leads the pack in the 3000 m steeplechase final, with countrymen Bernard Barmasai (centre) and Wilson Boit Kipketer in close pursuit

17



ERIC DRAPER/AP PHOTO

18



MIKE POWELL/ALLSPORT

Women's Pole Vault

After a titanic struggle in pouring rain, Stacy Dragila of the USA cleared 4.60 m to become the first women's Olympic pole vault gold medallist. The battle lines had been drawn early with Russian-born Australian Tatiana Grigorieva and Iceland's Vala Flosadottir also vying for gold. It was a battle that lasted more than three hours, as Grigorieva's every jump seemed to see her carried upwards on a wave of noise from the capacity Australian crowd. Her tenacious challenge, conducted in the wake of Cathy Freeman's outstanding victory, led her to a personal best of 4.55 m and secured the silver.

The bronze medallist was Flosadottir, who became the first Icelandic woman ever to win an Olympic medal, breaking her own national record with a vault of 4.50 m. With a perfect record at every height to that point, Flosadottir actually led the competition, as Dragila's record was blemished with failures at 4.40 m, two at 4.50 m, and another at 4.55 m. But it was not to be, as Dragila's first-time clearance at 4.60 m was enough for the former rodeo queen to take the title.

adapt to the cold, wet conditions and who leapt 2.35 m for a season best and the Olympic gold. Kliugin defeated world record holder Javier Sotomayor of Cuba, who silvered with 2.32 m. Sotomayor, a veteran at age 33, has been competing successfully in this event for 17 years but had been restricted in his preparation for these Games because of drug sanctions. Algeria's Abderrahmane Hammad was a surprise bronze medallist and Voronin, the pre-event favourite, finished tenth.

Women's High Jump

Her first Olympic Games, her first Olympic medal – a gold! Thirty-year-old Yelena Yelesina, a Russian living in Melbourne, Australia, made a remarkable return to elite athletics. The European champion in 1989 and world No.1 in 1990 came back to win the women's high jump with a leap of 2.01 m – just one centimetre below her personal best, set a decade before.

Men's Pole Vault

When world record holder Sergey Bubka of Ukraine failed to qualify for the final of the men's pole vault, it marked the end of a champion's era. In the final the top four athletes cleared 5.90 m. It was a personal best for Nick Hysong from the USA, and after a count-back he was awarded the gold from fellow American Lawrence Johnson. World champion and gold medallist from Barcelona, Maksim Tarasov of the Russian Federation, failed to live up to expectations and placed third.

Men's Long Jump

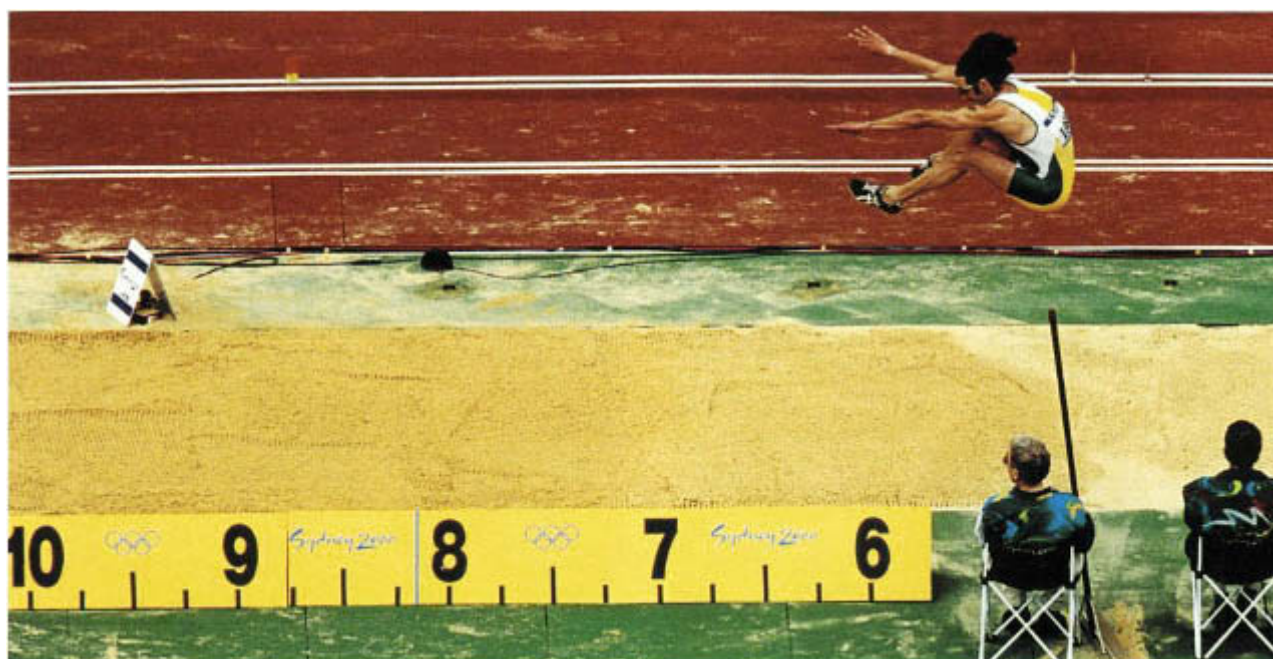
The favourite for the men's long jump was Cuban Ivan Pedroso. He was the best-performed jumper in 2000 with a leap of 8.65 m. He led into the final three jumps with Jai Taurima of Australia pressing him. Taurima, urged on by a

Athletics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



19

MIKE POWELL/ALLSPORT



20

ADAM PRETTY/ALLSPORT

18. Olympic debut: Stacy Dragila on her way to becoming the first female Olympic gold medallist in pole vault

19. Ivan Pedroso cries for joy when he realises he has won the men's long jump, an event Carl Lewis had dominated since 1984

20. Jai Taurima in action during the long jump qualifying round. Taurima and Pedroso would fight an epic battle for gold in the final

Athletics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



21



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22



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23



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21. Arsi Harju, Finnish strongman, after upsetting the dominant US shotputters and winning a surprise gold medal
22. Marion Jones on the dais with veteran long jumper Heike Drechsler
23. Friendly rivals: Steve Backley (left) and Jan Zelezny share a moment during the men's javelin competition
24. Gold medallist Jan Zelezny proves his long-standing good form with a powerful throw

crowd of over 100 000, led with 8.49 m into the last round but Pedroso, in his final jump, took the gold with 8.55 m. Roman Schurenko of Ukraine came third.

Women's Long Jump

In the women's long jump the USA's Marion Jones was seeking the third of a hoped-for five gold medals. It was not to be. Two experienced and skilful jumpers outdistanced her. Thirty-five-year-old German Heike Drechsler, who won her first world title 17 years earlier, took first place with a jump of 6.99 m. Italy's Fiona May was second, adding yet another silver to the medals she collected at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta and the 1999 world championships. She leapt 6.92 m, the same as Jones, but finished better, based on the strength of six consistent jumps. Drechsler, world champion in 1983 and 1993 and Olympic gold medallist in Barcelona in 1992, took the lead on her third jump. Jones threatened with what looked to be a 7.50 m jump but it was judged a foul, as were three of her other attempts.

Men's Triple Jump

At the 1996 Olympic Games world record triple jumper Jonathan Edwards of Great Britain was the favourite for the event. His silvers instead of gold, there and at the world championships in Athens in 1997, were disappointments. So too was his bronze at the 1999 Seville world championships. In Sydney, however, he achieved ultimate success, winning the gold with a jump of 17.71 m. Cuban rival Yoel Garcia was second, 17.47 m, and the Russian Federation's Denis Kapustin third, 17.46 m.

Women's Triple Jump

With the spectre of Inessa Kravets, who had dominated this event since its introduction in 1996, removed, the way was open for Tereza Marinova of Bulgaria to become the new women's triple jump champion. The event was won with her first jump of 15.2 m – after that the competition could

not catch her, particularly as the weather deteriorated and conditions for jumping became difficult. Pre-Games favourite, the Russian Federation's Tatyana Lebedeva, tripled 15 m on her penultimate jump and took the silver, with Olena Hovorova of Ukraine third.

Men's Shot Put

The USA dominated the men's shot put, but it was the huge heave of 21.29 m by Finland's Arsi Harju, in his second throw, that made him the Olympic champion. His surprise victory was even sweeter because it was the first Olympic



BILL STICKLAND/ALLSPORT

gold for his country in this event since Antwerp in 1920. The USA showed their strength in the event, taking up the next three places. Adam Nelson was second in 21.21 m, John Godina third in 21.20 m and Andrew Bloom just out of the medals with 20.87 m.

Women's Shot Put

After six throws Yanina Korolchik of Belarus snatched victory with her final throw, setting a new national record of 20.56 m. After her throw she declared: "I'm happy beyond my capacity to express it adequately." The silver medal went to the Russian Federation's Larisa Peleshenko, who threw 19.92 m in her second throw and led throughout most of the competition. Gold medallist from Atlanta, Germany's Astrid Kumbernuss, managed a bronze medal in Sydney with 19.62 m, despite an injured elbow.

Men's Discus Throw

Of the 12 finalists in the men's discus three represented Germany, two each were from Belarus and the USA, while Canada, South Africa, Lithuania, Estonia and the Russian Federation provided one each. Lithuanian's Virgilijus Alekna led the competition after his third throw, but secured his victory with a massive 69.30 m on his fifth attempt. After his win he exclaimed: "My, what a year it has been for me ... marriage, birth of child, now gold. That's enough now!" Lars Riedel of Germany, 68.50 m, won silver, and South African Frantz Kruger took the bronze medal with 68.19 m.

Women's Discus Throw

The oldest woman in the field heaved the discus 68.40 m to win the gold medal. Ellina Zvereva of Belarus finished the competition with two fouls, but had secured her win on her third throw. Anastasia Kelesidou of Greece won the silver, 65.71 m, while the bronze went to another athlete from Belarus – Irina Yatchenko with 65.20 m.

Men's Hammer Throw

Polish athlete Szymon Ziolkowski won the men's hammer with 80.02 m on his fourth throw. The Italian thrower Nicola Vizzoni, 79.64 m, set a personal best in winning silver and Igor Astapkovich of Bulgaria threw 79.17 m for third.

Women's Hammer Throw

The women's hammer throw made its Olympic Games debut in Sydney and Poland made it a magical double in the hammer. Kamila Skolimowska heaved a massive 71.16 m on her third throw, pushing her into the lead which she maintained throughout the competition. The silver medal went to the Russian Federation's Olga Kuzenkova and third place to Kirsten Muenchow of Germany.

Men's Javelin Throw

The nearly invincible Jan Zelezny of the Czech Republic won his third consecutive gold medal, this time with an Olympic record 90.17 m. He was marginally ahead of the brilliant 30-

year-old from Great Britain, Steve Backley, 89.85 m, who in turn survived an 88.67 m throw from Russian Sergey Makarov.

Women's Javelin Throw

Atlanta bronze medallist Trine Hattestad of Norway secured her gold medal on her first throw, setting an Olympic record of 68.91 m. Second was Mirella Maniani-Tzelili from Greece who set a national record in her third throw of 67.51 m. Osleidys Menendez from Cuba won the bronze medal with a throw of 66.18 m.

Decathlon

After the first day and five events of the decathlon, American Chris Huffins led the competition with 4554 points. World record holder and favourite for this event, Czech Tomas Dvorak, had hoped these Games would see him become the first man to pass 9000 points in a decathlon. Instead the end of the first day saw him languishing in seventh place, obviously suffering from an injury sustained at his pre-Games training camp in Queensland.

By the end of the second day Huffins was still in the lead – but only by 14 points. Hot on his heels were Estonia's Erki Nool and the Czech Republic's Roman Sebrle. The last event, the 1500 m, was acknowledged as Huffins' weakest and the scene was set for a showdown. Huffins ran a season best in the long race but it was not good enough to win him the competition.

Erki Nool won the decathlon, and Estonia's first Olympic track and field gold medal, with a total score of 8641 points. Sebrle won the silver with 8606 points and Huffins the bronze with 8595 points.



25

25. Decathlete Dean Macey of Great Britain, who would finish fourth in the overall ranking, in action during the shot put

26. Joyful victory: Denise Lewis had to run through the pain of an injured archilles tendon to win the heptathlon



26

27



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28



PHIL HILL/YARDNEWS LTD

Heptathlon

Thirty-three women contested the heptathlon at the Sydney Games. Consistent Natalya Sazanovich of Belarus led after the first day with 3903 points. Great Britain's Denise Lewis was third after the first day. A good long jump of 6.48 m and a 50.19 m throw in the javelin put her 63 points in front of the Belarus athlete with one event to go. She needed to finish no more than 4.3 seconds behind Sazanovich in the 800 m.

She accomplished this challenge and won a well-deserved gold medal. Sazanovich was beaten for the silver medal in the last event by the Russian Federation's Yelena Prokhorova, who ran an outstanding 2:10.03 for the 800 m.

Men's 20 km Walk

Controversy marred the men's 20 km walk. Bernardo Segura of Mexico, already given two red card warnings earlier in the race, crossed the finish line first, but received a third red card and was agonisingly disqualified. Polish walker Robert Korzeniowski was surprised when he crossed the line in 1:18:59 that he was the winner in an Olympic record. Second place went to Noe Hernandez of Mexico in 1:19:03 while the bronze medal went to the Russian Federation's Vladimir Andreyev in 1:19:27.

Women's 20 km Walk

The women's 20 km made its Olympic Games debut and like its male counterpart, was also plagued with controversy. Crowd favourite, Australian Jane Saville, was leading the field as she made her way to the tunnel into the Stadium. But it became a living nightmare when a judge raised the red paddle, indicating she was disqualified, and her dream of Olympic gold was over. The race was won by China's Liping Wang in 1:29:05 with Kjersti Plætzer of Norway claiming silver in 1:29:33 and Spain's Maria Vasco with bronze in 1:30:23.

Men's 50 km Walk

In an extraordinary race Poland's Robert Korzeniowski led from the gun to secure the gold medal and become the first man in Olympic history to win the walking double. His time of 3:42:22 was over a minute ahead of Latvia's Aigars Fadejevs in 3:43:40 with Joel Sanchez from Mexico placing third.

29



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27. The field of the men's 20 km walk before leaving the Olympic Stadium

28. Jane Saville, later disqualified for running, during the women's 20 km walk

29. Robert Korzeniowski and Joel Sanchez shoulder to shoulder during the men's 50 km walk

Bringing up the rear of the field was injured British athlete Chris Maddocks. Over an hour after the winners had crossed the line Maddocks was still out on the course, struggling just to keep moving. The large video screens in the Stadium focused on Maddocks as he doggedly fought on. He entered the Stadium to the song by the Proclaimers, 'I Would Walk 500 Miles', and the crowd roared and rose to their feet. It was an Olympic moment like no other.

Men's 4 x 100 m Relay

On a mild, still evening Olympic 100 m champion Maurice Green anchored the USA to victory in 37.61. The Brazilians settled for silver in a national record of 37.90, with Cuba winning bronze in 38.04. After winning Green said: "I've always said I wanted to bring United States sprinting back on top. Now the relay gold is back in the United States."

Women's 4 x 100 m Relay

The women's 4 x 100 m relay was part of the gold medal plan for Marion Jones of the USA, but the Bahamas had a different agenda. They had three women in the 100 m final and so their success in the relay should not have come as a surprise. Their exchanges were professional and evidence of a serious campaign to win this event. They won in 41.95, with the Jamaicans second and the Americans third. Merlene Ottey's silver medal was her eighth – more than any other female track athlete in Olympic history. "I'm not ready for the rocking chair yet!" she exclaimed.



30

Athletics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



31

OLIVIER MORIN/AFP

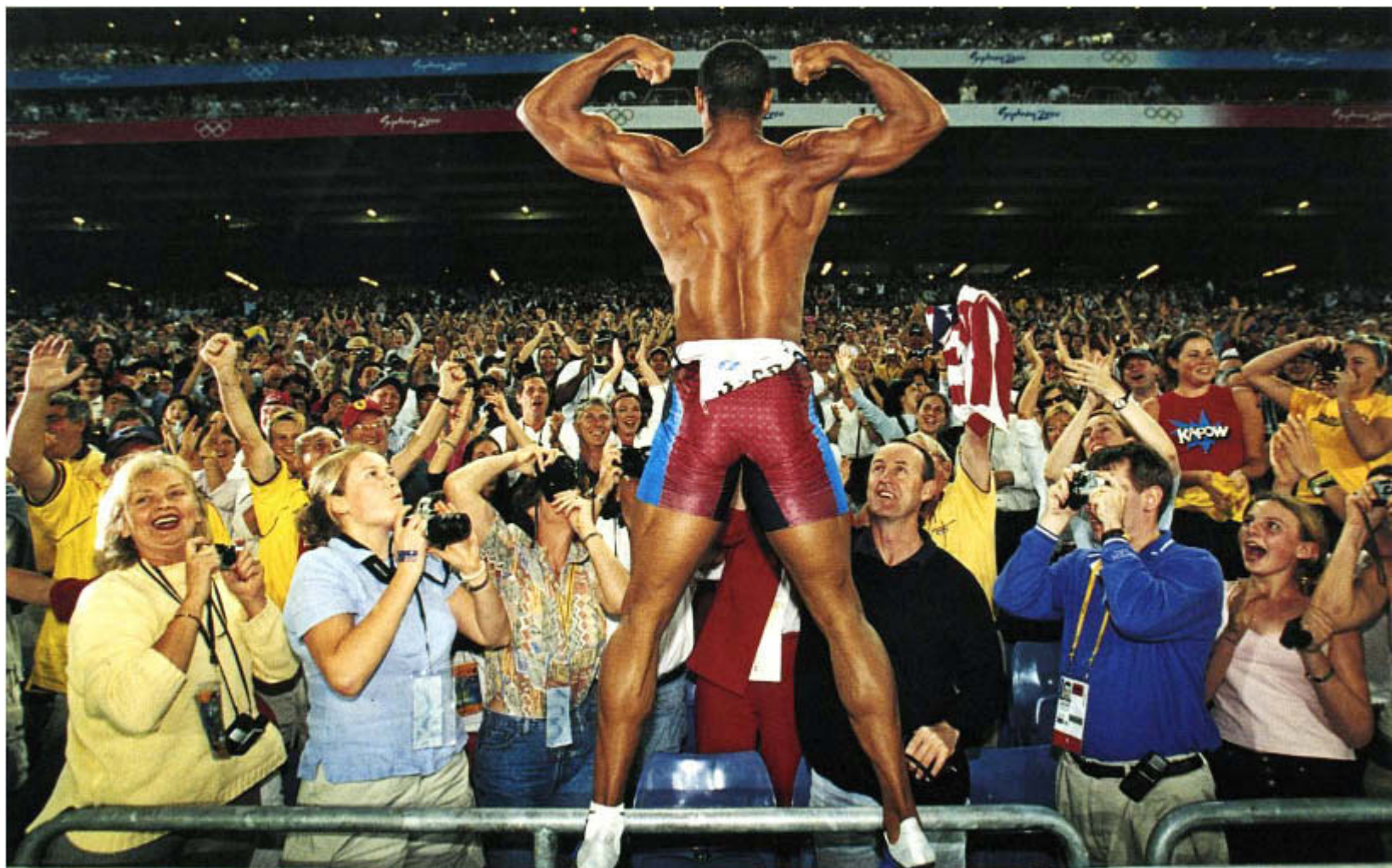
Men's 4 x 400 m Relay

The 4 x 400 m relay belonged to the Americans. Michael Johnson collected yet another gold as part of the US men's team. Nigeria just tipped out Jamaica for the silver medal. The winning time was 2:56.35.

Women's 4 x 400 m Relay

The USA added a third gold medal to Marion Jones' tally for these Games. Jones ran a sizzling third leg for the USA to set her team up for victory. The American women won in 3:22.62, with Jamaica second and the Russian Federation third.

30. Debbie Ferguson and the Bahamas relay team ended a 16-year American reign when they won the women's 4 x 100 m relay
31. Detail during the women's 4 x 100 m relay
32. Crowd pleaser: Jonathan Drummond, part of the victorious US 4 x 100 m relay team, poses to the delight of the spectators



32

MIKE POWELL/SPORT





BADMINTON

Pavilion 3, Sydney Olympic Park
16–23 September 2000

Badminton is a relatively 'new kid on the block' in Olympic sport. Events for both men and women in the sport began at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. At the three Games (1992, 1996 and Sydney 2000) where badminton has been contested, athletes from Asian nations have dominated, winning a total of 38 gold, silver and bronze medals. Athletes from Denmark and Great Britain account for the other four medals. In Sydney 172 athletes from 28 countries competed in this, the fastest racquet sport in the world.

The badminton contests were held in Pavilion 3, an impressive venue located next to the huge Olympic Stadium in Sydney Olympic Park. The Pavilion seats 6000 and attracted large crowds of supporters during the final days of the tournament. Included were a number of dignitaries, allowing spectators the added bonus of celebrity-watching between matches.

Early in the men's singles competition, Chelsea Clinton, daughter of the US President, had congratulated countryman Kevin Han for being only the second American to win a match at an Olympic badminton tournament.

Men's Singles

In the men's singles the chance for gold opened up when world No. 1, Taufik Hidayat from Indonesia, was defeated by seventh seed Ji Xinpeng of China. Hidayat is a home-town hero and felt the weight of an expectant nation on his shoulders willing him to win a medal for Indonesia.

Hidayat said he felt mentally burdened by people's expectations. "I offer my apologies for failing to give the Indonesian people what they had expected from me. I'm preparing myself to face the criticisms from the public," he told Indonesian journalists after the match.

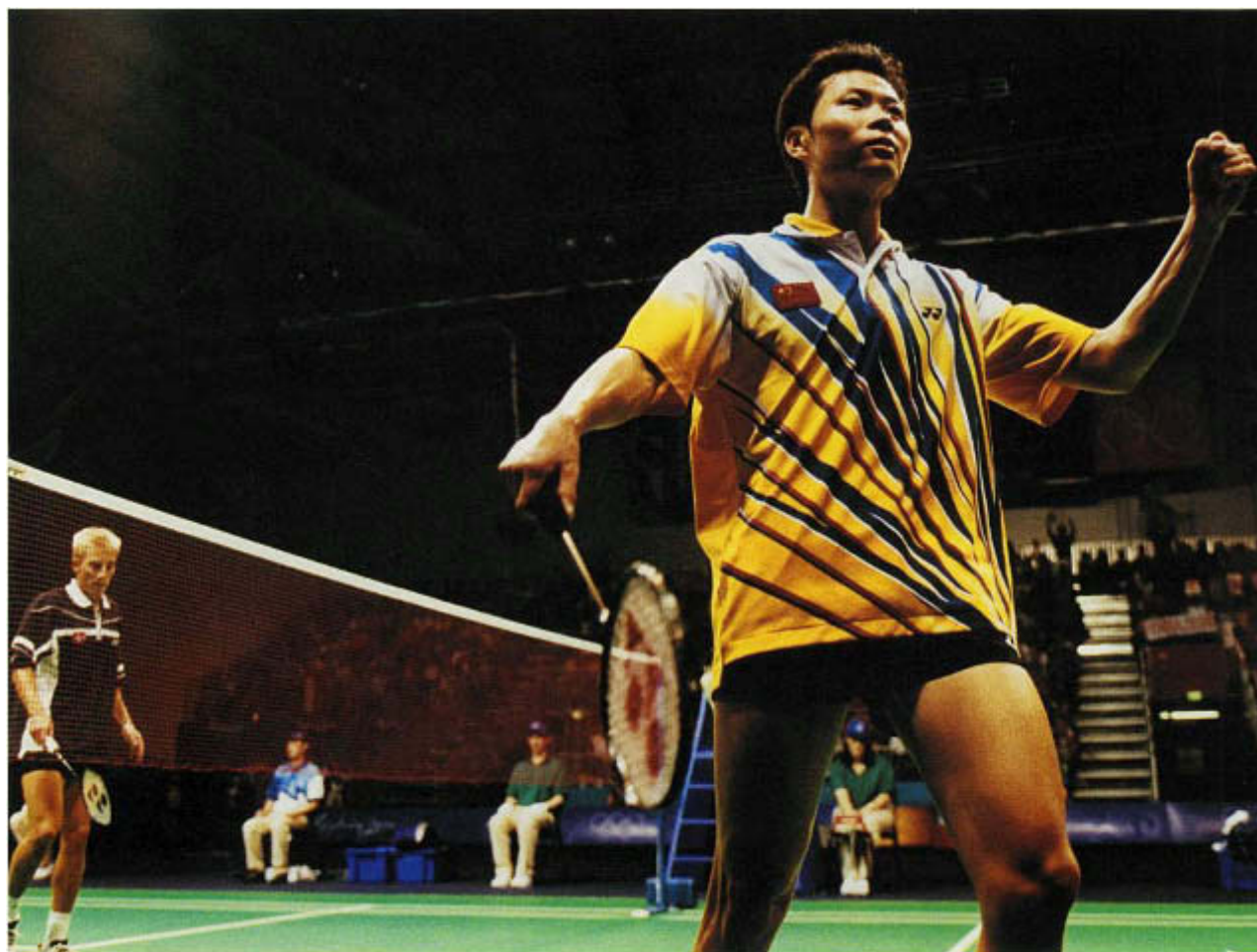
The bronze medal match was won by Xia Xuanze of China over Denmark's former world No. 1 and tournament third seed Peter Gade in two straight games. "He's a much better player than that," commented Xia.

The gold medal game belonged to seventh seed Ji Xinpeng of China, who triumphed over Indonesia's Hendrawan 15–4, 15–13. Hendrawan's silver medal matched his No. 2 seeding. Ji said, "My coach should get all the credit. He worked on my game strategy and my mental state."

Men's Doubles

Tony Gunawan and Candra Wijaya of Indonesia overcame the excellent Korean team of Ha Tae-Kwon and Kim Dong-Moon 15–13, 15–10 to gain a place in the men's doubles final, while the other semifinal saw the more highly ranked of the two Korean pairings, Lee Dong-Soo and Yoo Yong-Sung,

Badminton
 Volume Two
 Chapter Five



2

1. Candra Wijaya and Tony Gunawan of Indonesia in synchronised action against Dong-Moon Kim and Tae-Kwon Ha of Korea during the doubles semifinal
2. Ji Xinpeng of China celebrates a point in the semifinal match against Peter Gade of Denmark

MICHAEL STEELE/ALLSPORT

Badminton
Volume Two
Chapter Five



defeat Malaysia's Choong Tan Fook and Lee Wan Wah 15–12, 7–15, 15–4.

The struggle for the bronze medal took place between Choong and Lee of Malaysia and Ha and Kim of Korea. The Koreans had the mastery, winning in two games 15–2, 15–8.

The final was a classic encounter between Korea's best and the famous Indonesian 25-year-olds Gunawan and Wijaya, winners of the World Grand Prix final in December 1999. After a roller-coaster ride the Indonesians prevailed 15–10, 9–15, 15–7. In a post-match interview silver medallist Yoo told journalists, "We played 100 per cent tonight, but the better team won." It was Olympic spirit at its best.

Mixed Doubles

The youthful Chinese mixed doubles team of Zhang Jun and Gao Ling, 22 and 21 years of age respectively, had been playing together for only 18 months and yet they won gold in Sydney against hot opposition. The Indonesians, Tri Kusharyanto and Minarti Timur, were the favourites going into the match, having beaten the Chinese pair on two occasions in the lead up to the Games. When the Chinese

managed to win only one point in the first set of the final, it appeared that the predictions were correct and the Indonesians would be the victors.

The Chinese had other ideas and played more aggressively in the second set to win 15–13. The Chinese combination continued their run by building a 4–0 lead in the decider, but the Indonesians closed the gap to 4–3.

At the crucial point, Zhang was reaching incredible heights to rain down fierce smashes at Timur, winning seven points in a row and taking the score to 11–3. The Indonesians fought back, but could not defeat the Chinese pair, who secured their gold medal in winning the final set 15–11.

In Great Britain, the BBC and thousands of badminton fans had fixed their hopes for Olympic gold on fifth seeds Joanne Goode and Simon Archer. After all, wrote Stewart Roach in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, "Simon hits the shuttle as fast and straight as an archer's arrow, timed at 261 kilometres per hour but also has a deft touch around the net and openly shows his emotion in a very conservative game." Despite such a build up it was not enough to claim the ultimate prize. The two lost their chance for gold or silver in the semifinal against the Indonesian team of Kusharyanto and Timur. After being blown away 2–15 in the first game, the Britons had a lead of 10–1 in the second and it looked almost certain they would advance to the gold medal game. But the Britons grew tense and their lead was cut to a point at 13–12. They served weakly and lost the set 17–15. In the deciding set the Indonesian pair sped to a 12–6 lead and went on to win 15–11. It was bitterly disappointing for the British duo. After the match Archer agonised with the realisation they had come within a stroke of a gold medal chance. Archer agreed that for one-and-three-quarter sets, he and Goode had never played better. "It's a pity it wasn't two," he added. "It's been a fantastic week. With the way results have gone and our draw, we have done well but there is no doubt we ought to have reached the final. I am very disappointed, it hasn't really hit me yet, but later I am sure I will be absolutely gutted. Now we have to pick ourselves up for the bronze medal match." And Goode added, "We had a game plan and it was really working, then we grew tense and tried to hit harder and harder. They [the Indonesians] lap up that kind of play."

The initial disappointment of the British pair was salvaged by bronze – their country's first Olympic medal in this sport – won in the match against the Danes Michael Sogaard and Rikke Olsen 15–4, 12–15, 17–14.

Women's Singles

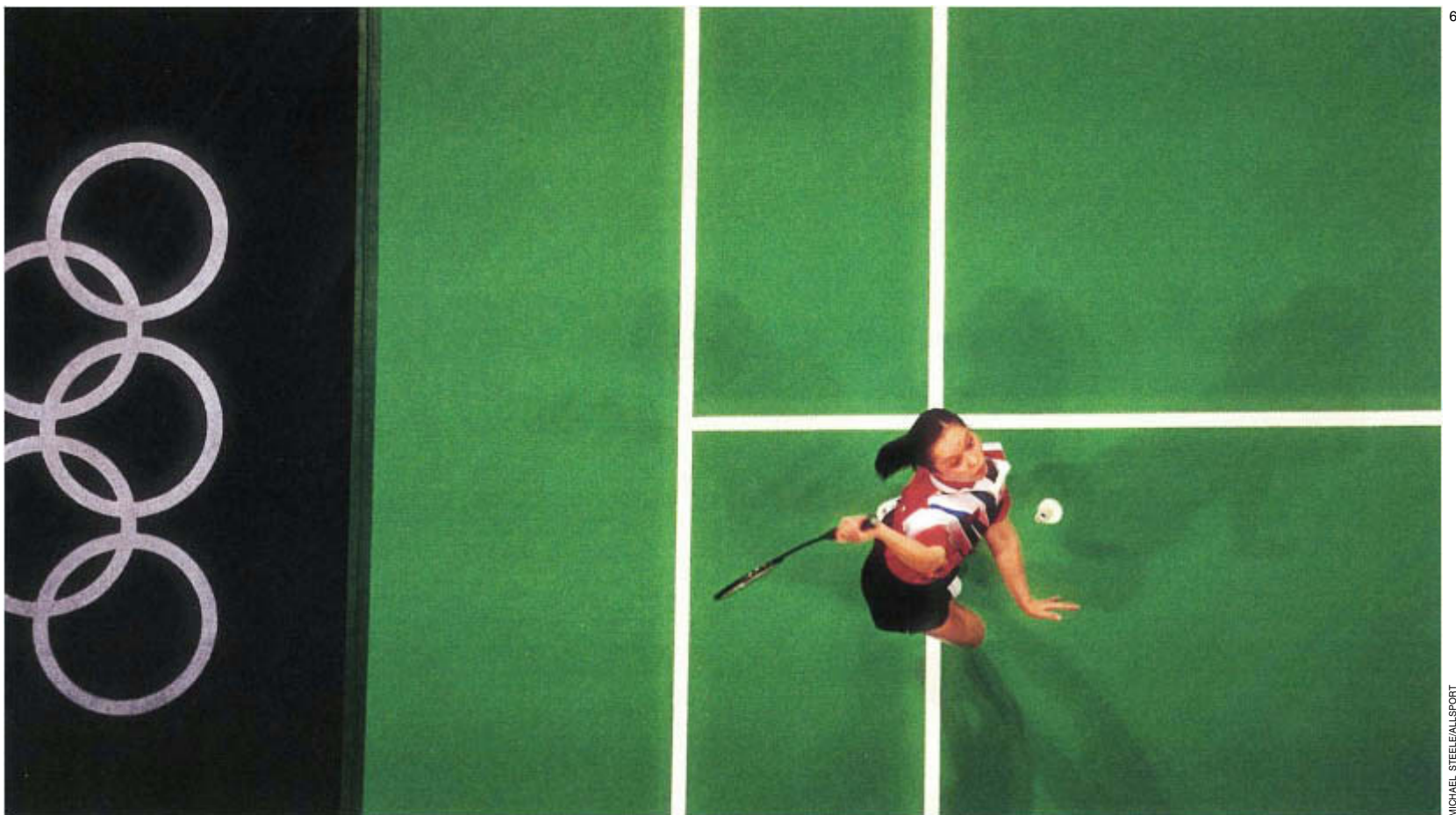
China was always assured of at least one Olympic medal in the women's singles. It was just a question of what colour and which player produced on the day. In the clash for the bronze medal two of China's elite met on the afternoon of 22 September, former dual world champion Ye Zhaoying overcoming Dai Yun 8–11, 11–2, 11–6. The match for gold was a classic. Denmark's national hero – and fiancée of Peter Gade – Camilla Martin, was beaten 13–10, 11–3 in 31 minutes by China's agile top seed, Gong Zhichao. Badminton experts had had their eyes on Zhichao since she won the



3. British hopefuls Joanne Goode and Simon Archer win the bronze medal in the mixed doubles

4. Tri Kusharyanto and Minarti Timur of Indonesia, favourites in Sydney, celebrate after defeating Great Britain in the semifinal

5. China's Gao Ling (left) and Zhang Jun take a victory lap around Pavillion 3 after winning the mixed doubles gold



MICHAEL STEELE/ALLSPORT

All-England and Japan Open tournaments earlier in the year. Still, it was a surprisingly easy victory, considering Martin has been Danish champion ten times, European champion three times, as well as 1999 world champion. She was gracious in defeat, admitting that "Gong deserved the gold on the night". It was China's first Olympic gold medal in the women's singles event and a precursor to the country's dominance at this Sydney badminton tournament.

Women's Doubles

It was all China in the women's doubles, its athletes taking the gold, silver and bronze medals. The buzz in Sydney's badminton arenas was about the Chinese women, their coach Li Yongbo, his Spartan attitudes and his controversial management style. China's dominance extended into the semifinals, in which it fielded three of the four teams. Ge Fei and Gu Jun beat their countrywomen Gao Ling and Qin Yiyuan, 15-7, 15-12.

Advancing into the finals as well were Huang Nanyan and her partner Yang Wei, overcoming Chung Jae Hee and Ra Kyung-Min of Korea, 15-6, 15-11. It was an emphatic gold medal win for Ge Fei and Gu Jun, 15-5, 15-5 over Huang and Yang. After the Games Yang said, "We are very young and inexperienced. We played worthy opponents and they deserved the gold this night."

China's sweep was the first in Olympic Games badminton doubles. Leading Chinese sportswriter Cao Jianjie found the secret of China's success after visiting their remote training camps near Beijing and Tichum: no television, no telephones, no leaving camp without permission and

immediate expulsion for any rule violation or any practice let-up. Coach Li's disciplined training evidently worked with these young Chinese women.

Contrasting personalities and supportive differences in physical skills made the gold medallists Ge Fei and Gu Jun nearly perfect doubles partners. Both were 25 years of age and had practised and played together incessantly for 14 years. "They had earned an aura of invincibility," wrote sportswriter Jianjie.

The modern game of badminton may have originated in India as 'poona', but sport historians note much older Chinese beginnings. The game was popular in Great Britain from the 1870s, taking its name from Badminton, the Duke of Beaufort's estate. It is unlikely, however, that the ancient and modern history of their Olympic sport was of overwhelming interest to the superb athletes in Sydney. Of more immediate interest was playing to near perfection their smashes, drops, clears, net strokes and drives.



MIKE HEWITT/ALLSPORT

6. Veteran player Ye Zhaoying of China hits the shuttle during the bronze medal match against compatriot Dai Yun

7. Ge Fei and Gu Jun present their gold medals. The women's doubles event ended with an Olympic first: a clean sweep for China, winning gold, silver and bronze





BASEBALL

**Baseball Stadium, Sydney Olympic Park
Blacktown Olympic Centre, Aquilina Reserve
17–27 September 2000**

Tommy Lasorda is one of baseball's real characters. For many years he managed the Los Angeles Dodgers, leading them to two World Series wins. He was most usually seen in the home-team dugout at Dodger Stadium, unless he had emerged onto the diamond to pull a pitcher or have a friendly discussion with an umpire. He was not only part of the Dodgers' fabric, he was and is also part of what makes up Los Angeles. His Italian roots, love of food and candid personality have made him an attraction in a city that is overflowing with celebrities and in a country that had invented baseball and saw it as its own game.

Having been elected to the American Baseball Hall of Fame he had arguably achieved all his sport had to offer. But he hadn't coached an American team at an Olympic Games. Before coming to Sydney he had said, "To coach for my country at the world's biggest sports festival - this is fantastic. This is the biggest thing I've done. I don't need to do this. I want to do this."

When the USA won the baseball gold medal at Sydney on his 73rd birthday he showed all the passion he was famous for. Tears streamed down his face and he said, "This is bigger than winning the World Series. I have never been as proud as I was tonight." The Americans had to beat the Cuban juggernaut to claim the gold. The victory took the Olympic title back to the country that invented the sport.

Baseball at the Olympic Games has had an interesting history. Exhibition matches had been played at seven Olympic Games between 1912 and 1988, but it wasn't until 1992 at Barcelona that it became a medal sport. In 2000, there was another important innovation when, for the first time, professional baseballers were eligible to compete in the Olympic Games. Despite this, it was only the USA which did not select players who were currently at the peak of their major league careers. Top professional players from other countries' top leagues were released to play in the Sydney Games.

Eight teams qualified to compete in Sydney. The Cubans were favoured to repeat their gold medal performances in Barcelona and Atlanta. The USA and Japan were expected to contend, as were Korea, the 1999 Asian champions, and Australia, which had won the Intercontinental Cup in 1999. The Netherlands and Italy were both considered to be capable of providing upsets, while the Republic of South Africa, competing for the first time, was expected to struggle.

Sydney 2000 saw some highly credentialled players compete. Cuban third-baseman Omar Linares, who boasted remarkable statistics in both Cuban and international competition, came

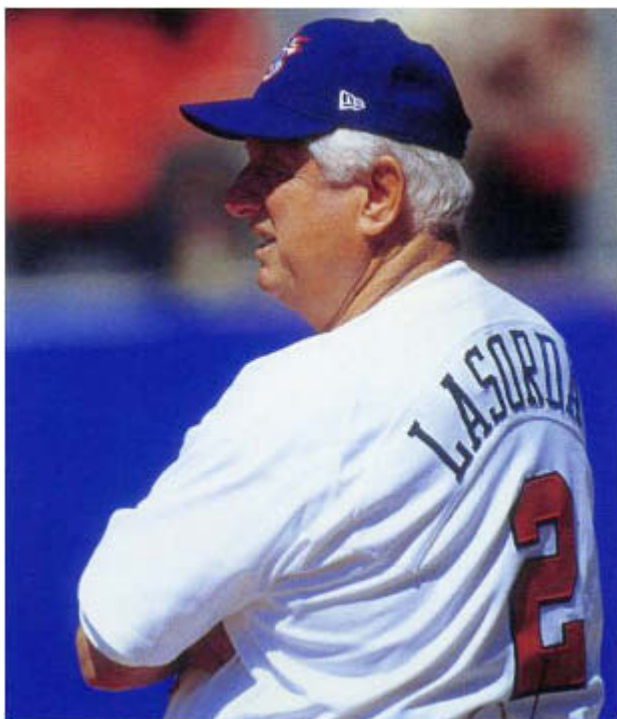
to these Games with an Olympic batting average of .488. Veteran catcher Pat Borders of the USA had won two world series rings with the Toronto Blue Jays in a 12-year major league career. Australia was led by former Milwaukee Brewers' catcher and utility player Dave Nilsson, a 1999 National League 'All Star' selection. Japan included pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka, 1999 rookie of the year, and Korea featured Lee Seung-Yeop, who held the domestic record of 54 home runs in one season.

A total of 287 000 spectators witnessed the entire tournament, 42 000 at Blacktown and 245 000 at the Baseball Stadium. The preliminary rounds, held at both the Baseball Centre in Blacktown in Sydney's west, and the Baseball Stadium at Sydney Olympic Park, provided some 18000 spectators each day with dramatic and historic contests.

In Game 2, played at Sydney Olympic Park, the USA and Japan entered into a monumental pitching duel. Ben Sheets pitched seven shutout innings, leaving the game with a 2-0 lead. However, the USA's relievers were unable to hold the lead, as Japan scored one run in both the eight and the ninth innings to even the score at 2-2.

It wasn't until the bottom of the 13th inning, with the score still 2-2, and with one runner on base, that left-fielder Mike Neill launched a shot over the right-field wall to give the United States a 4-2 victory. It was the longest baseball game ever played at the Olympic Games – a total of 213 minutes – and the performances of Sheets and Neill provided a portent of what would occur later in competition.

Game 14 featured the Netherlands and Cuba. Cuba had beaten South Africa 16–0, Italy 13–5 and Korea 6–5 in its earlier games, while the Netherlands had upset Australia 6–4 and then lost to Japan 2–10 and the United States 2–6. Cuba was the unbeatable favourite for this game and things appeared to be going according to schedule when brilliant third-baseman Omar Linares homered for Cuba in the top of



Baseball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Mike Neill, Doug Mientkiewicz and Pat Borders of the US team listen to their national anthem after winning the baseball final. The team, put together just before the Games, was an unheralded group of young players and surpassed all expectations
2. Matthew Buckley of Australia bats during a preliminary match against Korea
3. The big man of baseball: US head coach Tommy Lasorda watches his team during the preliminaries against Japan, confident that he can lead the players to the first Olympic baseball gold for the USA

4



JAMIE SQUIRE/ALLSPORT

the first inning. However, Dutch pitcher Ken Brauckmiller recovered and pitched strongly, scattering seven hits over eight innings. In contrast, Cuban starter Norge Luis Vera breezed through the first two innings before running into trouble in the bottom of the third inning. He was promptly dragged by Cuban coach Servio Borges and replaced with flamethrower Maels Rodriguez. After Rodriguez, who was timed at 99 mph, struck out a batter, he faced left-fielder Hensley 'Bam Bam' Meulens with two out and loaded bases. Meulens' hit gave the Netherlands a 4-1 lead that they held until the ninth inning.

After right-fielder Miguel Caldes reached base on an error in the ninth, Dutch coach Pat Murphy brought in centre-fielder Rikkert Faneyte to close out the game, which he duly did, the Cubans scoring one unearned run in the process. The 4-2 victory by the Netherlands was the first defeat for the Cubans in Olympic competition.

Every team had its bright moments. Although convincingly beaten in all their other games, South Africa recorded its first Olympic Games win by upsetting the Netherlands 3-2. Heroes included Tim Harrell, who pitched a complete game, and right-fielder Ian Holness, who slugged two home runs. A return of one win from eight games may not sound impressive, but South African manager Raymond Tew stated after this match that the win "is the most important in South Africa's baseball history. The impetus in the development of baseball in South Africa will be boosted – we did not want to lose all the games and send the wrong message."

There were some brilliant individual performances during the preliminary rounds. Despite playing in an under-achieving team, Australian David Nilsson comfortably had the highest batting average, an amazing .565, followed by Cuban Antonio Pacheco with .450. Nilsson also led the slugging percentage .957, followed by Cuban Oscar Macias with .783. Eight players tied for the home run lead with two apiece. Overall, Nilsson was the outstanding offensive player, finishing in the top ten in every offensive category, even stealing three bases.

A number of pitchers returned impressive statistics. Five pitchers conceded no earned runs after pitching six or more innings during the preliminary games. Jon Rauch of the USA with 21 strikeouts was the tournament's number one, clear of Cuban Jose Ibar with eighteen. Reliever Ryan Franklin from the USA was 3-0, the only pitcher to record three wins. Cuban reliever Maels Rodriguez struck out 15 and gave up no earned runs over 8.2 innings. Korean Chong Tae-Hyon pitched seven innings, as did Roy Oswalt of the USA. There were also some hard luck stories. Probably the worst sufferer was Australian Shayne Bennett, who ended up with a 0-2 record despite a miserly 0.75 earned run average, let down by poor fielding and poor offence.

The semifinals and medal games were virtual pitching clinics, following the pattern set in the preliminary rounds. Cuban Jose Ariel Contreras pitched a six-hit, complete game shutout against Japan, his second shutout of the tournament. Cuba went ahead 1-0 in the bottom of the fourth inning and added two insurance runs in the sixth, all from first-baseman Orestes Kindelan's bat. Starter Tomohiro Kuroki pitched bravely for Japan but received no offensive support.

The semifinal between the USA and Korea was equally exciting. Korea scored twice in the top of the third inning but the USA responded in the bottom of the fourth and drew level in the seventh. With one out in the bottom of the ninth, first-baseman Doug Mientkiewicz homered for a 3-2 win to put the USA into the final with Cuba.

Cuba had won their earlier match against the USA during the preliminary round, gaining a four-run lead in the first inning which they never relinquished, winning 6-1. That game had

5



JAMIE SQUIRE/ALLSPORT

4. A Korean cheerleader in the stands chants for her team

5. Jin Pil-Jung of Korea pitches in a preliminary match against Australia

provided the most controversial moment during the baseball competition, when US slugger Ernie Young confronted pitcher Jose Ibar after being hit by a pitch timed at 92 mph. The dugouts emptied but commonsense prevailed.

So the final brought the two heavyweights of the competition together. United States manager Tommy Lasorda entrusted the pitching duties to 22-year-old Ben Sheets, their number one starter. For Cuba, Pedro Luis Lazo, somewhat surprisingly, was the starting pitcher. Lazo started confidently, striking out the first two batters. Next batter was left-fielder Mike Neill, who came into the final with a modest batting average, but also with two home runs, one of which was the clutch homer that won the game against Japan. Neill put the USA in front in the first inning with a blast over the left-field wall and it was a lead that Cuba never threatened. Lazo was in trouble again in the second inning, giving up two hits, but Cuban coach Borges responded quickly, replacing him with Jose Ibar. Ibar put out the fire but ran into trouble himself in the fifth inning, giving up a run and putting two runners on base. Again Borges acted quickly, bringing in hard-throwing Maels Rodriguez. With two out, right-fielder Ernie Young hit a hard ground ball up the middle, scoring two runs, both debited to Ibar, to give the USA a 4-0 lead that everyone at the match sensed was unassailable. This indeed was the final score.

In contrast, Sheets never allowed Cuba the hint of a run. He cruised through the game, giving up only three single-base hits while not walking anyone. He had brilliant fielding to support him, especially short-stop Adam Everett, who made seven assists, and first-baseman Mientkiewicz, who made some spectacular saves. Only Omar Linares made any impact for Cuba, getting two hits.

The bronze medal play-off matched up Asian heavyweights Japan and Korea. Korea had defeated Japan 7-6 in Game 22 of the preliminary round. That was a surprisingly high score, as both teams displayed stronger defence than offence. The bronze medal match was to prove almost as close, but with defence predominating. Opposing pitchers Daisuke Matsuzaka of Japan and Koo Dae-Sung of Korea were commanding, both pitching complete games. Matsuzaka struck out ten batters; Koo struck out 11.

In the bottom of the eighth inning, with the score still locked at 0-0, Korean centre-fielder Jung Soo-Keun sacrificed shortstop Park Jin-Man to second. Matsuzaka induced a ground ball but second-baseman Jun Heima's throwing error left runners at the corners. Korea's major offensive threat, slugger Lee Seung-Yuop, then hit a two-out double to score both runners. Lee then scored off Kim Dong-Joo's single to right field. All three runs were unearned. Japan could only manage a consolation run in the ninth inning, leaving Korea the bronze medal winners 3-1.

The pitchers were not as dominant as in the softball competition but still the defence was mainly on top. The introduction of professional ballplayers to the Olympic Games could be considered a success.

The importance of Olympic baseball in the minds of the players was summed up best by Australian David Nilsson, who had turned his back on the 2000 American Major League season in order to represent Australia at the Olympic Games. When asked what he had given up to play in the Games, he replied, "I don't feel I've made any sacrifices to play in the Olympics – it's still the Olympics."

Baseball

Volume Two
Chapter Five

6
IAN GILLESPIE/FAIRFAX7
JED JACOBSON/SPORT8
JED JACOBSON/SPORT

6. Italy's Daniel Newman on the pitchers mound during a match against Australia, which his team won 8-7

7. Jose Ariel Contreras of Cuba, star of the semifinal against Japan, pitched a six-hitter and struck out nine

8. Ernie Young of the US team is tagged out during the final against Cuba. Victory over Cuba, who had won the Olympic competition in Barcelona and Atlanta and defeated the USA in the preliminaries 6-1, was a special moment for Lasorda and his team





BASKETBALL

**Sydney Superdome and The Dome, Sydney Olympic Park
17 September–1 October 2000**

When you have invented a sport you are expected to dominate it, and so the USA was expected to win the men's and women's basketball at the Sydney Olympic Games, just as they have at previous Games. But Sydney was different. The USA did win the men's and women's gold medals, but for the first time it looked as though the rest of the world was gaining on them.

It was the 12th gold medal in 14 Olympic basketball competitions for the US men's team. After they narrowly beat Lithuania by two points in the semifinals, they let France creep to within four points in the final. The final victory margin of ten points was the lowest ever for the USA in a gold medal victory. It was the fifth time in these Olympic Games that the Americans won by 15 or fewer points, quite different from 1996 and 1992, when the US teams won every game by at least 22 points and often had victory margins of 40 points or more. The closeness of matches made for exciting competition and raised questions about the continued 'Dream Team' domination.

In the women's competition the USA defeated Australia in the final, and in doing so claimed the fourth gold medal for the veteran Teresa Edwards. After 20 years and five Olympic Games, Sydney 2000 was her swan song. With the stadium emptying quickly and her gold medal around her neck, she sat on the centre circle and savoured her final Olympic moment.

Women's Competition

Twelve nations took part in the women's competition, including five nations making their debut in basketball at the Olympic Games – France, Senegal, Slovakia, New Zealand and Poland. Clear favourites for the gold medal were the USA, current world champions and winners at three previous Olympic Games. The main competition to the USA was expected to come from Brazil, Australia and Russia. With their unique style, Korea was also considered capable of providing upsets, as were Canada and Cuba. Of the newcomers to the Olympic Games, Poland, the 1999 European champions, were expected to perform well. The countries were divided into two groups. Eight teams would then progress to the sudden-death quarterfinals, the leading team in each group playing the fourth-placed team in the other; and the second-placed team in each group playing the third-placed team in the other group.

In the preliminary rounds there were few surprises. In Group A the winner was not decided until match 52, when France and Australia, both undefeated, met. The French had been second at the European championships and played up to

their reputation. But it was the Australian team which led the match from the start, ending up 69–62 winners to finish undefeated in the group. Brazil was the other team in Group A that looked threatening. They lost narrowly to France 70–73, but were convincingly beaten 81–70 by Australia. Clearly the Australian Opals were the home-town favourites, but the team from Senegal, despite losing every match, captured the imagination of the crowd. Perhaps it was their unwillingness to ever show any sign of giving up, despite the unfavourable nature of the score lines that invariably confronted them.

In Group B, the USA was unbeaten, showing a combination of individual skill and flair, excellent organisation and a fierce competitive spirit. Whenever they were challenged they were able to regroup, often making adjustments to their defensive patterns. This was evident in the group match against the Russian Federation. The Russian team was very well organised, with a lot of strength inside and able to shoot well from the perimeter and beyond. They led narrowly at half-time, but the USA regrouped and ended up winning comfortably, 88–77. Throughout the preliminary rounds, Lisa Leslie showed great strength and execution, Sheryl Swoopes displayed lightning speed and brilliant instinct and the US team's depth was demonstrated time and again. Bench players maintained the standard established by the starting five. The Russian Federation, Korea and Poland, each with three wins, finished second, third and fourth respectively. Cuba had one win, despite being competitive in most of their games. New Zealand, outgunned in all their matches, was strongly supported by the crowd whenever they played.

In the quarterfinals, the USA easily defeated Slovakia 58–43, while Australia had an equally emphatic win against Poland, 76–48. The other two matches provided more excitement. The well-drilled Koreans outplayed the French, winning 68–59 in a minor upset. The highlight of the quarterfinals was the match between Brazil and the Russian Federation. In many ways it was a classic match-up. The Russians were

Basketball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Kevin Garnett of the USA rises above Ramunas Siskauskas of Lithuania during the semifinal which almost led to the USA's demise
2. Members of the US men's team clasp hands in celebration after a victorious match
3. Delisha Milton, the USA's centre, looks to pass the ball during the preliminary match against New Zealand, which the Unites States won 93-42



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MICHAEL CONROY/AP PHOTO



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CHRIS HELGREN/REUTERS

Basketball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



PAUL HANNAR/REUTERS

Brazil powered their way to an 84–73 win. The winners were obviously delighted with their bronze medal, celebrating as only Brazilians can.

Men's Competition

In contrast to the women's competition there was only one country debuting in the men's competition: New Zealand. Overwhelming favourite was the USA, winner of 11 Olympic gold medals. 1998 world champions Yugoslavia, European champions Italy, bronze medallists at the 1992 and 1996 Olympic Games Lithuania, two-time gold medallists the Russian Federation, and Australia, were also expected to perform well. Canada, France, Spain and China were considered capable of upsetting the favourites. As for the women's competition, the countries were divided into two groups.

The USA dominated Group A, inflicting crushing defeats on China, 119–72; Italy, 93–61; and New Zealand, 102–56. Their closest result was an 85–76 win over Lithuania. The USA absolutely dominated the boards, rebounding all opponents. Italy came second with three wins. Lithuania was third, also with three wins; France was fourth with two wins.

In Group B, the surprise team was Canada, which won the first three games before losing to the Russian Federation 59–77. They bounced back to defeat Yugoslavia 83–75 in their final preliminary match, leapfrogging into first place. Their most impressive win was 101–90 against Australia, the only occasion where a team other than the USA scored 100 or more points. Yugoslavia won their first four games and finished second. The Australian Boomers were inconsistent during the preliminaries. A veteran team, led by five-time Olympian Andrew Gaze, they performed well for periods but then seemed incapable of defending against faster opponents willing to shoot from the perimeter. They managed to defeat the Russian Federation 75–71 with a last-gasp, three-point shot from Gaze and then struggled to beat Angola 86–75.

In a sometimes heated match, the USA fought hard to win their quarterfinal over a determined Russian Federation, which went to an early 14–4 lead. Thereafter the USA imposed their dominance, leading by five points at half-time and running out eventual winners 85–70.



ELISE AMENDOLA/AP PHOTO

individually very skilled and, as a team, highly disciplined and patient. Brazil also contained wonderful talent and played with great athleticism, spontaneity and an overtly high level of emotion. The half-time score was 39–38 for the Russian Federation, which led for most of the first half. Brazil's most dangerous scorer, Janeth Arcain, received her fourth foul late in the first half and played less than three minutes of the second. Despite this handicap, the lead changed hands seven times before Brazil went ahead 68–67 with 1.3 seconds left to play. A desperate last shot from Russian Irina Routkovskaia went tantalisingly close but missed, enabling Brazil to progress to the semifinals. The Brazilian's jubilation energised the capacity crowd.

The semifinals saw Korea match the USA throughout the first half and early into the second. The half-time score favoured the USA 42–40. Once again, the US team adapted their defensive style to effectively shut down the Korean attack. The final score of 78–65 was an almost identical margin to their preliminary match. In the other semifinal, Australia dominated from the beginning and led for the entire match. Every time Brazil mounted a challenge the Australians responded and reasserted their lead. The final score of 64–52 was an accurate reflection of the difference on the day.

The final brought together the two unbeaten teams. Due to their magnificent record in matches leading up to the Olympic Games, the US team was the strong favourite. The crowd, however, was willing an upset to occur. From the early stages, the US team played in an uncompromising fashion and put their stamp upon the game. Australia played at times with skill and resolve but was never able to seriously threaten the US team's lead. Led by Lisa Leslie, the USA had a decisive victory 76–54. The US team was clearly thrilled, starting their celebrations even before the match was completed.

The bronze medal match proved to be as exciting as any in the tournament. By half-time the spirited Koreans led 34–30. At full time the score was tied at 65–65 but fouls and weariness were obviously catching up on Korea. In overtime,



MICHAEL CONROY/AP PHOTO

- 4. Players jump for the ball at the start of the women's semifinal match between Australia and Brazil
- 5. Australia's Jo Hill (centre) tries to get past Teresa Edwards (left) and Yolanda Griffith during the women's final against the USA
- 6. US women's coach Nell Ann Fortner gets a hug from her mother after the team's Olympic victory
- 7. Frederic Weis of France battles with Luc Longley of Australia in the semifinal



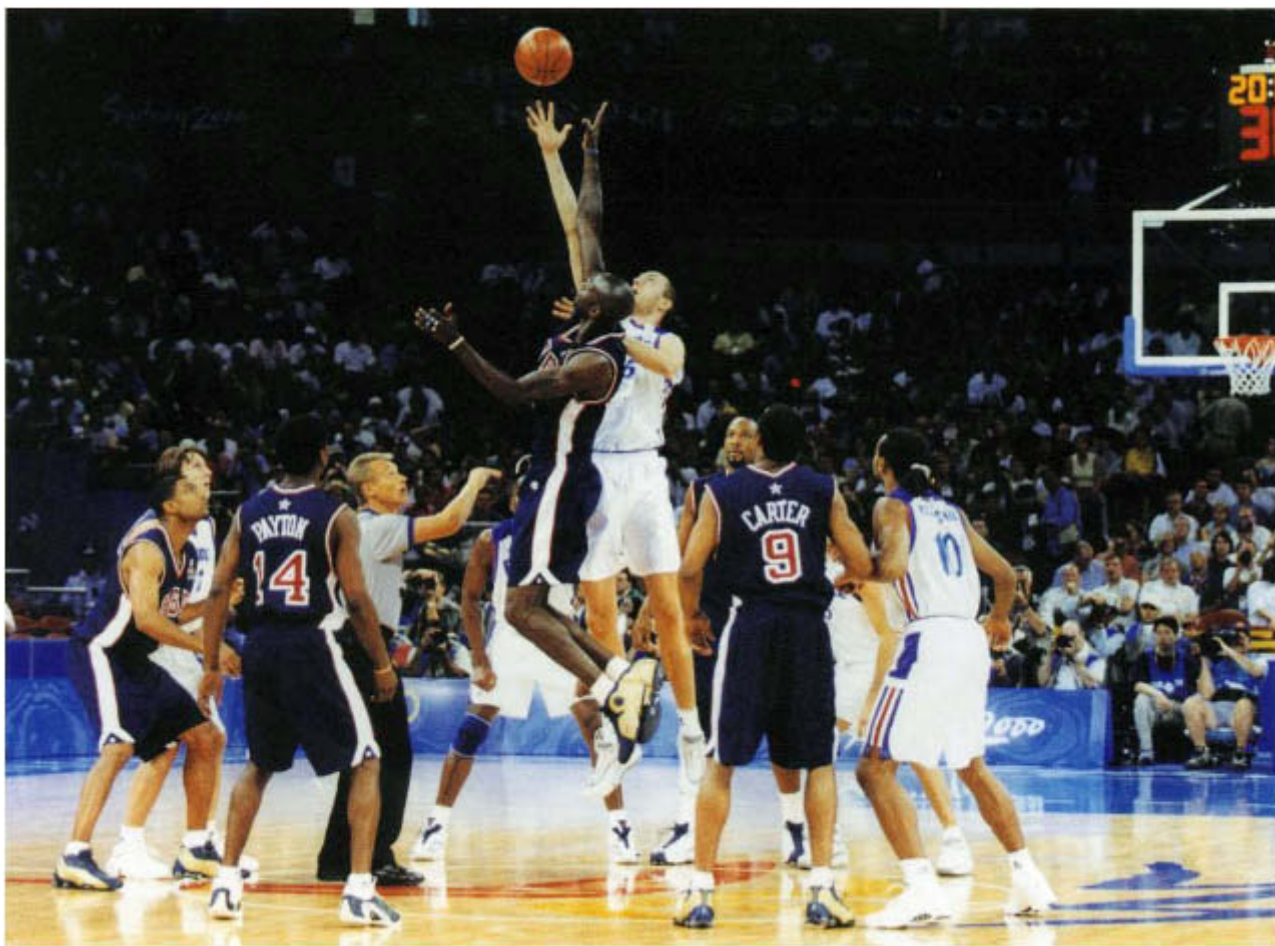
DOUG PENNINGER/ALLSPORT

The other quarterfinals featured upsets. Australia established an early lead over Italy, riding on the back of Andrew Gaze who scored 27 points, 22 of them in the second half, helping Australia win 65–62. Canada was expected to dominate France, which had progressed to the quarterfinals on the strength of only two wins. However, the French had shown glimpses of form in their final preliminary match, where they lost to the USA by 12 points. France won 68–63. Lithuania, led by centre Gintaras Einikis with 26 points and guard Sarunas Jasikevicius with 18, advanced by beating heavyweights Yugoslavia 76–63. For Lithuania, it was the third time they had advanced to the Olympic Games semifinals in three attempts; for Yugoslavia, it was an unexpected exit for the reigning world champions and silver medallists at the 1996 Olympic Games.

only one of the three free throws. It wasn't enough. The USA won 85–83.

The earlier semifinal between France and Australia had little of the excitement of the second match. France appeared much sharper and shot accurately and often from the perimeter, a tactic against which the Australians had shown themselves to be vulnerable in the preliminary games. France established an early lead which they extended as the match progressed. By half-time France led 44–29; the final score of 76–52 was a true reflection of the French team's superiority.

The final featured the unbeaten USA and France, which had risen to unprecedented heights after their struggles in the preliminary rounds. After the excitement and upsets of the



GREG FORD/SPORT THE LIBRARY

The second semifinal between the USA and Lithuania proved to be the most exciting and closely contested game of the tournament, with Lithuania going within a basket of beating the USA. After trailing by 14, Lithuania turned things around early in the second half, thanks to guard Sarunas Jasikevicius, and after five minutes had established a 56–54 lead. The lead was to change hands eight times during the half, with scores level on 11 occasions. Jasikevicius was everywhere, organising the Lithuanian attack and scoring points when they were most needed. The most dramatic moment came with 44 seconds to go and the scores level at 80–80. Lithuania had the ball and set up guard Ramunas Siskauskas for a three-point shot. The shot missed, but Siskauskas was fouled. Siskauskas, who had not missed a free throw during the tournament, stepped up to the line. Presumably the pressure got to him, as he could convert

quarterfinals and semifinals, another upset would not have shocked anyone. However, the final went to plan, the USA establishing a 9–7 lead after five minutes, which they extended to 46–32 at half-time and never relinquished. France played with great conviction, encouraged by a supportive crowd, clawing back to within four points with four minutes to go. But the USA settled to reassert their dominance and win 85–75.

In the bronze medal match, Lithuania continued their excellent form to easily defeat Australia 89–71. This was the second successive Olympic Games in which Australia had faced Lithuania for the bronze. Certainly Australia's retiring Boomers – Gaze, Bradtke, Vlahov and Luc Longley – would have liked to go out on a high. As it was, they had to be content with equalling their best Olympic finish.

Basketball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



JED JACOBSON/ALLSPORT



DARREN MCINMAR/ALLSPORT

8. The USA and France tip off the ball in the men's final

9. Dejan Bodiroga of Yugoslavia (left) on his way to a slam dunk during the quarterfinals against Lithuania

10. Alonzo Mourning on the dais as the US continues its nearly unbroken reign of Olympic basketball competitions. Since 1936, only three gold medals have gone to other teams





BOXING

**Sydney Exhibition Centre, Halls 3 and 4, Darling Harbour
16 September–1 October 2000**

Despite its controversial reputation, boxing proved to be one of the most popular sports at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Fighting before packed houses that often included celebrities like World Boxing Association heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield, boxers from 22 countries shared the 48 Olympic medals on offer. Eager to put aside the controversies that have dogged Olympic boxing in the past, the International Federation for Boxing (AIBA) Secretary-General Loring Baker said, "We've done everything conceivable [at the Sydney 2000 Games] to make it right."

Baker pointed out that most of the referees and judges officiating in Sydney were attending their first Games. The five international judges seated around the ring – with two sharing one side – worked alone, using the push-button electronic scoring machines first introduced at the 1992 Barcelona Games. Video cameras mounted above the ring were used for the first time at the Sydney 2000 Games to scrutinise the scoring procedures of all five judges.

The Olympic boxing tournament was held over a period of 16 days at the luxurious, air-conditioned, 10-year-old Sydney Exhibition Centre in Darling Harbour. Just minutes from central Sydney, Darling Harbour boasts a beautiful waterfront setting and is one of Australia's major tourist attractions. Bouts on days one to nine were held in Exhibition Hall 3 with a seating capacity of 7500. Day ten was a rest day during which the partition was removed between Halls 3 and 4 and the seating capacity increased to 10 000.

Three hundred and twelve men representing 74 nations competed in 12 weight categories, with 28 athletes in each category except for the heavyweight and super heavyweight divisions, where there were 16 each. Unlike other Olympic sports, there are four medallists in each weight division. Both losing semifinalists receive bronze medals, thus sparing them the necessity of fighting again immediately after a defeat.

In Sydney, for the first time bouts consisted of four rounds of two minutes each, rather than the traditional three rounds of three minutes each. A boxer who was knocked down or stunned was not allowed to resume fighting until a mandatory count of eight was made. Three eight-counts in a round, or four in a fight, automatically ended the bout. The referee could also stop a contest if he believed a boxer was receiving excessive punishment or if the boxer fell so far behind in the score that he was considered completely outclassed.

Much of the pre-Olympic publicity for boxing centred on the relative merits of the Cuban and US teams. Cuba, which completed the 1996 Atlanta Games with four gold and three

minor medals, arrived at the 2000 Olympic Games declaring their intention to take home all 12 gold medals on offer. The USA, winner of one gold and five minor medals in Atlanta, claimed they were bringing one of the great boxing teams in Olympic history to Sydney.

Particular attention in this rivalry focused on the heavyweight bout between Cuba's legendary Felix Savon, seeking his third consecutive Olympic gold medal, and America's Michael Bennett, world amateur heavyweight champion and reformed former prison inmate. The two men met in the quarterfinals on 26 September, Day 11 of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. "It will be a great battle between two warriors," declared Bennett on the eve of the fight. Unfortunately, one of the warriors left his weapons at home. Savon clubbed Bennett with a succession of big right hands to lead 7–2 at the end of the opening round. With three seconds left in round three, Bennett was 'RSCOed' out (referee stopped contest outclassed) with Savon ahead 23–8.

Neither Cuba nor the USA lived up to their own pre-Games billing. Cuba went home with four boxing gold medals, more than any other nation, but they fell well short of the target they had set for themselves. For its part, the USA was relegated to an unfamiliar role, becoming the nation's first team in 52 years to leave an Olympic Games with no boxing gold medals.

A survey of the various weight divisions at the Sydney 2000 Games reveals that three of the gold medallists came from European nations – including the Russian Federation, Great Britain and France, four from Cuba, two from Kazakhstan and one each from Thailand and Uzbekistan. In fact, the real boxing story at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games lay in the performances of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Between them, the two former Soviet-Asian republics accounted for seven boxing medals – three gold, two silver and two bronze. The Russian Federation also won a total of seven medals in boxing

Boxing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Bekzat Sattarkhanov of Kazakhstan celebrates his win over Ricardo Juarez of the USA to take gold in the featherweight division
2. In a much anticipated clash, Felix Savon of Cuba (right) is wrestled to the floor during his victory over Michael Bennett of the USA in the 91 kg boxing preliminaries



2

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Boxing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



Asloum caused a huge upset when he squeezed out Romero, the defending Atlanta gold medallist, by a single point in the semifinals.

Flyweight (51 kg)

Wijan Ponlid won Thailand's second ever gold medal and a A\$1 million bonus from the King of Thailand and sponsors when he beat Kazakhstan's Bulat Jumadilov, world champion and defending Atlanta silver medallist, 19–12. Ponlid announced that he would resist offers to turn professional and that he looked forward to the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. Vladimir Sidorenko from Ukraine and Jerome Thomas from France took the bronze medals.



– two gold, three silver and two bronze. Asked why his country of only about 16 million people did so well, Kazakhstan's Minister for Sport, Daulet Turlykhanov, said, "Boxing is our national sport. It is the very strongest sport among our young athletes." The Kazakhstan government added to their young athletes' incentive by promising a bounty of US\$100 000 to anyone who returned with an Olympic gold medal.

Light-Flyweight (48 kg)

Frenchman Brahim Asloum, his hair tinted red, white and blue to match the French flag, used his reach advantage to outpoint the smallest man in the tournament, Rafael Munoz Lozano from Spain, 23–10 for the gold medal. In the lead up to the Olympic Games the French team spent time in training camps with the Cubans and quickly learned many of the secrets the Cubans have so heavily guarded. The light-flyweight bronze medals went to Kim Un Chol from North Korea and Maikro Esquirol Romero from Cuba.

Bantamweight (54 kg)

On his 20th birthday, flashy Cuban bantamweight Guillermo Rigondeaux Ortiz, sometimes called Cuba's answer to Sugar Ray Leonard, proved he could 'dance better than Fred Astaire and pop his opponents from long range like a mini-Ali'. Rigondeaux Ortiz outpointed Raimkoul Malakhbekov of the Russian Federation 18–12 after trailing 6–7 at the end of the second round. Rigondeaux Ortiz also put on a dazzling display in the semifinals to outpoint Clarence Vinson from the USA 18–6. Serguey Danilchenko from Ukraine took the other bronze medal.

Featherweight (57 kg)

Controversy surrounded one of the greatest upsets of these Olympic Games when Bekzat Sattarkhanov from Kazakhstan defeated the USA's 20-year-old world champion, Ricardo 'Rocky' Juarez, who had been unbeaten in 68 fights. It



3. Brahim Asloum of France (left) in action against Rafael Lozano Munoz of Spain during the men's 48 kg gold medal bout
4. Asloum cries as he receives his gold medal
5. Wijan Ponlid of Thailand holds up a picture of the King of Thailand as the referee declares him the winner in the 51 kg boxing final against Bulat Jumadilov of Kazakhstan

appeared Sattarkhanov was 'holding' Juarez, and the crowd at the Darling Harbour Exhibition Hall began booing him.

Sattarkhanov put a long left in Rocky's face, belted the American when he came inside, then held when he had a lead. Juarez, who lost the bout 14–22, complained that his opponent was warned many times for holding but was never penalised. The USA lodged a formal protest and the Russian Federation referee, Stanislav Kirsanov, was subsequently suspended for four years. However, AIBA, which controls

Federation's Alexandr Maletin took the bronze medals in the lightweight division.

Light Welterweight (63.5 kg)

Mahamadkadyz Abdullaev of Uzbekistan stalked Ricardo Williams of the USA and hammered him with vicious punches to win the gold medal 27–20, proving that his victory over Williams in last year's world titles was no fluke. Tired from a barn-burner 42–41 win over Cuban



6

Boxing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



6. Alexandr Maletin of the Russian Federation cools off during the 60 kg boxing quarterfinals against Mario Kindelan of Cuba. Maletin would win the bronze medal while his opponent went on to win the gold

7. Sergey Dotsenko of the Ukraine lifts up gold medallist Oleg Saitov of the Russian Federation after the men's 67 kg boxing final

amateur boxing throughout the world, ruled that Sattarkhanov would retain his gold medal. Sattarkhanov went home to his US\$100 000 government bonus and Juarez declared his intention to embark on a professional career. Tahar Tamsamani of Morocco and Kamil Dzamalutdinov of the Russian Federation won the bronze medals.

Lightweight (60 kg)

Cuba's 29-year-old lightweight world champion, Mario Kindelan, who had won every major tournament in the lead up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, beat his opponent Andriy Kotelnik of Ukraine 14–4. Kindelan took the lead early and then started running, never letting Kotelnik get close enough to score. Toward the end, the Cuban began to pose and taunt. While boxers are not supposed to know the score until the bout ends, it is routine practice for progressive scores to be communicated to a fighter's corner by team members or supporters spying on media or judges' television monitors. After the Olympic tournament, AIBA Secretary-General Baker indicated that his organisation would be considering effective measures to deal with this problem. Mexico's Cristian Bejarano Benitez and the Russian

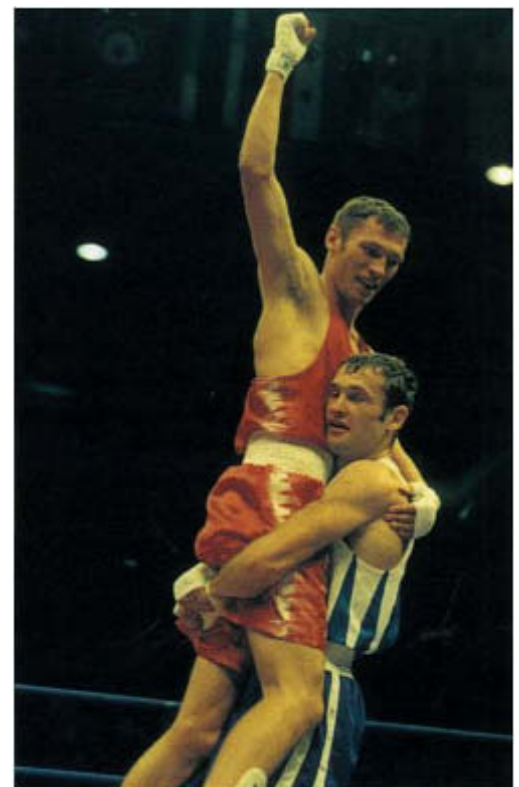
Diogenes Luna Martinez in the semifinals, the 19-year-old Williams showed enormous courage in slugging it out with Abdullaev. Mohamed Allalouc of Algeria won the other bronze medal.

Welterweight (67 kg)

The Russian Federation's Oleg Saitov sniped away at Ukraine's Sergey Dotsenko to win 24–16 and retain the crown he won at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. Shifty and sharp, Saitov had a close call in the quarterfinals when he tied 10–10 with Azerbaijan's Ruslan Khairov. Using the AIBA tie-breaker, the judges gave the win to Saitov, who registered 55 scoring blows during the bout to Khairov's 47. The bronze medals in the welterweight division went to Dorel Simion of Romania and Vitalii Grusac of the Republic of Moldova.

Light Middleweight (71 kg)

In one of the closest bouts of the finals (25-23) Yermakhan Ibraimov of Kazakhstan used a relentless attack to upset world champion Marin Simion of Romania, brother of welterweight bronze medallist Dorel Simion. After his victory,



7

AL BELLOALSPORT

Boxing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



8



AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Ibraimov said he intended to use the money he would receive from his government's Olympic Incentive Scheme to open his own boxing school. Pornchai Thongburan of Thailand and Jermain Taylor of the USA won the bronze medals.

Middleweight (75 kg)

In the gold medal bout Jorge Gutierrez of Cuba won a brawling encounter with Gaidarbek Gaidarbekov of the Russian Federation. With less than a minute to go and the fight tied at 15–15, Gutierrez continued to bomb away and take the bout and the gold medal 17–15. Vugar Alekperov of Azerbaijan and Zsolt Erdei of Hungary claimed the bronze medal.

Light Heavyweight (81 kg)

Alexander Lebziak, a Russian Federation army officer, led 7–2 after the first round and was never headed to claim the Olympic title. He outboxed Rudolf Kraj of the Czech Republic to win easily, 20–6. In an era when many Olympic medallists appear disappointed unless they win the gold, it was pleasing after the bout when Kraj declared, "I'm over the moon. I'm not at all disappointed with a silver medal. I knew my opponent is one of the strongest and most experienced fighters in amateur boxing." Bronze medals in the light heavyweight division went to Andri Fedtchouk of Ukraine and Sergei Mikhailov of Uzbekistan.

Heavyweight (91 kg)

When Cuba's Felix Savon won his third Olympic boxing gold medal he confirmed his status as the greatest amateur boxer of his time and removed any trace of disappointment from the 1999 world championships. At these championships Savon was heading for a seventh consecutive world title but after a dispute with AIBA officials Cuba had walked out of the tournament. It cost Savon a winning streak, but established him as a martyr in his homeland. Sydney was his chance for headlines without the controversy.

With time running out in the bout, Sultanahmed Ibzagimov of the Russian Federation re-opened a cut under Savon's left eye, an injury originally suffered in the Cuban's 14–8 semifinal

8. Jorge Gutierrez of Cuba (right) delivers a blow to Gaidarbek Gaidarbekov of the Russian Federation on his way to victory in the 75 kg final

9. Felix Savon of Cuba and Sultanahmed Ibzagimov of the Russian Federation are tended to during their gold medal bout in the 91 kg class

9



AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

victory over Germany's Sebastian Kober. For a few seconds it appeared the gold medal bout might be stopped, but Australian referee Wayne Rose allowed it to continue. The 198 cm Savon ran out a points winner 21–13. The 33-year-old father of five dedicated his victory to the glory of Cuba and Fidel Castro, its leader. Vladimir Tchantouria of Georgia won the other bronze medal.

Super Heavyweight (91+ kg)

A popular champion, Audley 'H-Bomb' Harrison won the first British boxing Olympic gold medal since Chris Finnegan's 1968 victory in the middleweight division. Harrison was also the first Briton to win the maximum weight class since Ronald Rawson in 1920. Russian Federation soldier Mukhtarkhan 'The Fly' Dildabekov got to the gold medal match by surviving three standing eight-counts to defeat 204 cm, 138 kg Cuban giant Alexis Rubalcaba Polleda, who put his first tournament opponent, German Cengiz Koc, in hospital with a concussion.

At 190 cm Dildabekov was a smaller, more compact boxer than Harrison, but Harrison had his measure, studying the moves of his opponent before the fight. "I'm really going to study this guy. I have to watch him a lot so I can do my visualisation. I will cocoon myself in a little world. I've still got to get in there and focus, and then take him out in the nicest possible way. I always believe my destiny. I intend to make the most of it," Harrison said before his gold medal match.

Harrison, with his hair plaited and dyed in the colours of the rainbow he saw over Sydney Harbour, took charge in the opening round of the gold medal bout when he rocked Dildabekov and forced a standing eight-count. Harrison kept the aggressive Kazakh at bay with his enormous reach, then produced stunning blows when it mattered in the third and

fourth as Dildabekov tried to move closer in and began to tire. The 198 cm and 110 kg H-Bomb led 9–4 after the second round as fans waved the Union Jack and chanted his name. Dildabekov cut the lead to 11–10 midway through the third round, but Harrison powered home with a flurry of punches in the fourth to win 30–16. Italy's Paolo Vidoz and Rustam Saidov of Uzbekistan won the bronze medals.

The win was the culmination of a grand plan for Harrison. It was his dream to win the Commonwealth Games, the world championships and finally the Olympic gold before turning professional. He fell at the second hurdle and was bundled out of the world championship, but he held on to his dream of Olympic gold and turned it into a reality.

At 19, Harrison had a promising career as a footballer, but an ankle injury that put paid to this career promoted a career in boxing. "I've always believed I was born to do something special. Boxing found me late, but it's my destiny. That's why I'm so cool and calm about everything. I'm blessed, it's something that has been bestowed upon me. I'm happy about my fate," Harrison said. He took some time away from the ring to complete a degree in sports studies at Brunei University where he wrote a 10 000-word dissertation on the future of British amateur boxing.

Throughout his amateur career promoters have offered Harrison huge sums of money to turn professional. Now with his medal secured he will embark on a professional career. "The money side and the fame are secondary for me, it's not my main motivation. What gets me up in the morning, the hours and hours of training, is actually the glory of competing in the ring. That's my arena. I enjoy myself in there. Getting to the top in boxing is going to mean money, it's going to win fame," Harrison said.

Boxing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



10

SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT



11

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10. German Cengiz Koc lies on the canvas after receiving a thunderous blow from Cuban Alexis Rubalcaba Polleda in the over 91 kg preliminaries. The Cuban won by a knockout and finished seventh overall

11. Steam rises from Audley Harrison of Great Britain during his gold medal clash with Mukhtarkhan Dildabekov of Uzbekistan in the over 91 kg class





CANOE/KAYAK: SLALOM

Penrith Whitewater Stadium, Penrith
17–20 September 2000

The exciting and popular discipline of canoe/kayak events was originally not on the program for Sydney 2000. The sport has been conducting world championships every two years since 1994, and made its debut in the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972. It was a tremendous success but due to the immense cost of artificially constructed courses, it did not feature again on the Olympic Games program until the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. It was held in Atlanta, but appeared unlikely for Sydney. But, with strong lobbying from athletes and a financial boost from the International Canoe Federation, a state of the art course was built in Penrith Lakes, and in September 1997 slalom was included on the Olympic program. Athletes began training with new zest, many making their way down under to live in Sydney and train on the course.

Throughout the four days of the Olympic slalom competition the sun shone brilliantly and crowds of over 12 000 were treated to a spectacle as the world's best negotiated the fast and furious course. Favourites were defeated and athletes capsized, while others performed beyond their expectations and took home Olympic medals. It was an exciting, dramatic competition.

Venue

The Penrith Whitewater Stadium is the first slalom course to be built without the assistance of a river. It is on the edge of a lake and draws water from the Penrith Lakes to deliver 2800 litres of water per second to the start pool at the top of the course, thus creating turbulent Whitewater. The competition channel was 320 m long, fell 5.5 m from top to bottom and had a channel width of between 8 m and 14 m.

Competitors entered the slalom course from the warm-up lake and accessed the start by means of a mechanical lift which carried them 50 m up to the start of the course. The U-shaped course, surrounded by natural grassed banks, allowed excellent views of the Whitewater channel but temporary grandstands extended this spectator space for 5000 people with an additional 7500 seats.

The rapids of the course are enhanced using a hybrid design of flow obstructions. The majority of these obstructions are made of natural stone and are fixed in position. A real design advancement in Sydney was the system of portable and moveable obstacles which allowed the course to be varied.

After competitors had a chance to try the course in the qualification, the design was rejected by both athletes and

team leaders, who claimed the course was 'too long and favoured some paddlers'. Competition Manager John Felton said most teams were concerned that the layout of the gates could have benefited left-handed competitors and they also wanted a reduction in the number of upstream gates from eight to six. The International Canoe Federation officials were forced to redesign the course, reducing the number of upstream gates to six and altering the 23 gate locations so that the event was 'a more reasonable test for all paddlers'.

Competition

There were four slalom events, three for men and one for women – women's single kayak (K1), men's single kayak (K1), men's single canoe (C1) and men's double canoe (C2). There was a rule change in Sydney with the reduction of penalty points from five seconds to two for a gate touch.

Men's C1

Reigning European champion, France's Tony Estanguet, snatched the gold medal in the men's C1 on the last run of the day. He beat the Atlanta gold medallist Michal Martikan

Canoe/Kayak
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Peter and Pavol Hochschorner, twins from Slovakia, steer down the slalom course on their way to gold in the men's C2 event
2. The slalom course at the Penrith Whitewater Stadium had to be redesigned just before the Games following protests that its balance of upstream gates favoured left-handed competitors

2



BOB PETERS/OLYMPIC COORDINATION AUTHORITY

Canoe/Kayak
Volume Two
Chapter Five



GARY M. PRIOR/ALLSPORT



CLIVE BRUNSKILL/ALLSPORT

of Slovakia by 1.89 points. Martikan had a brilliant first and second run but Estanguet, despite incurring a two-point penalty, proved too fast. Juraj Mincik, also of Slovakia, took third place. An estimated audience of 12 500 watched the event and, in the spirit of Olympic competition, applauded and encouraged all performers in their efforts.

Men's C2

As expected, twin brothers Pavol and Peter Hochschorner of Slovakia won the C2 in a decisive manner. This talented pair had won the European championships in 1998 and were ranked No.1 in this event coming into the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. The 20-year-olds, from an elite paddling family in Slovakia (their father is their coach), had the best run in the qualifying round and went on to win gold. Pavol admits there is some sort of special sibling connection which helps on the water. "It's good that we started together, and we live together and do everything together," he said. "It means that we can train together easily. Also maybe we have a little bit of the same minds so it helps."

They defeated the Polish pair Krzysztof Kolomanski and Michal Staniszewski, with the Czech Republic's Marek Jiras and Tomas Mader winning the bronze.

Women's K1

France was unlucky not to claim the women's K1 kayak event as well as the men's C1. Brigette Guibal was leading the final of the women's K1 when she capsized in the last stages of her 320 m run. The mistake cost her valuable time and she finished with the silver medal. The Czech Republic's Stepanka Hilgertova, defending her gold medal from Atlanta, claimed the gold medal with a consistently strong performance. The bronze medal went to Guibal's team-mate, Anne-Lise Bardet.



THOMAS COEVI/IFP



SHAUN BOTTERILL/ALLSPORT

Men's K1

At the end of the qualifying round in the men's K1 there were 15 boats within 10 seconds of each other. The top four paddlers were separated by less than a second. The close results promised an exciting showdown in the final with expectations that 'fortune will favour the brave'. But the final in fact proved to be a one-horse race. Thomas Schmidt of Germany won by a massive 6.46 points from Great Britain's Paul Radcliffe although Radcliffe, in his second run, had got within less than a second of Schmidt.

Radcliffe, the well-credentialled paddler from Great Britain, was the winner of two World Cup races during the season and a pre-Games favourite. He had spent a year in Penrith prior to these Games familiarising himself with the course and his medal justified the effort. Italian Pierpaolo Ferrazzi took the bronze. Austrian Helmut Oblinger and Scott Shipley of the USA, both of whom were expected to be contenders, were placed just behind the medallists. Mathias Roethenmund from Switzerland was the fastest qualifier in the first run but problems with the windy conditions cost him that opportunity and he finished in ninth position.

Twenty-one countries and 83 contestants entered the Olympic slalom events at the Sydney Games. The European nations were the strongest, with Slovakia and France winning three medals apiece.

3. Competitors in the Olympic canoeing are taken to the start of the course via a conveyor belt
4. Stepanka Hilgertova of the Czech Republic during the women's K1 event. Her gold medal in Sydney is the finishing touch on a four-year winning streak, spanning the Atlanta Games, the world and European championships as well as the World Cup
5. US fans cheer on their heroes
6. Thomas Schmidt of Germany has his eyes fixed on the finish line, set to win men's K1 event



CANOE/KAYAK: SPRINT

Sydney International Regatta Centre, Penrith
26 September–1 October 2000

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was a showcase for a postmodern, technologically sophisticated world at the end of the twentieth century. The sobriquet of the 'Games of the new Millennium', location in the brash, savvy, cosmopolitan city of Sydney and instant accessibility across all continents via television, the Internet and even mobile phone attests to this. Yet, despite these technological advancements and perfect planning by Games organisers, ultimately it was the effects of nature that had the greatest impact on the Canoe/Kayak sprint competition.

Up until the last two days of competition the weather had been benign and the water surface still, providing an ideal racing environment. Then, on September 30, the finals were delayed because of fog. But worse was to come. On 1 October, the final day of competition, ferocious winds of 60 kph buffeted the course, churning the waters into whirlpool-like conditions and causing a delay of six hours. Officials considered postponing the remaining events until the following day, after the Closing Ceremony, or even abandoning them completely. Long after most spectators had left the officials finally decided to proceed. When the races resumed the wind had still not abated, however, forcing the competitors to proceed in challenging conditions. It was also tough on the officials. Some had to be plucked from the water. Despite it all, the events were completed by late afternoon.

Venue

Sydney International Regatta Centre was built on the site of a former sand and gravel quarry. The magnificent facility consisted of a 2300 m competition course with a consistent five-metre depth, rock-coated wave-absorbing banks and a permanent nine-lane Albano-buoyed system. There was seating for 14 000 spectators and another 10 000 could view the competition from the grassed banks along the course. National flags hung gaily over the front of the seating area, and large television screens allowed an always-enthusiastic crowd to observe the races from start to finish.

Twelve events were contested – nine for men and three for women. Heats, semifinals and finals were held in each event if more than nine boats were entered. If nine or fewer boats were entered in a given event, all boats qualified directly to the final.

Men's C1 500 m

Hungary's Gyorgy Kolonics was almost a second clear of the Russian Federation's Maxim Opalev to win the gold medal in the C1 500. The bronze medal was won by Andreas Dittmer of Germany.



Canoe/Kayak
Volume Two
Chapter Five



QUENTIN JONES/FAIRFAX

Mens C1 1000 m

Another great race was the men's C1 1000 m final. Opalev from the Russian Federation led at 250 m, 500 m and 750 m, but Germany's Andreas Dittmer pushed inexorably to the front, leaving Opalev in sixth place. It was Dittmer with gold, Cuba's Ledys Frank Balceiro with silver, 1.692 seconds behind, and the bronze went to Canada's Steve Giles. Dittmer said, "It was wonderful, I looked left and right and saw that I was in the clear. It was the perfect race. I started out slow in the beginning, I couldn't keep up with the four of the leaders in the beginning so I decided to hold back and then I saw the others fading toward the end and I knew I could win. After winning the C2 in Atlanta now I've won the C1 here. I'm very, very happy."

Mens C2 500 m

Hungary's Ferenc Novak and Imre Pulai won the gold, narrowly defeating Poland's Pawel Baraszkiwicz and Daniel Jedraszko. Romania's Florin Popescu and Mitica Pricop won the bronze.

Mens C2 1000 m

The Romanian pair of Florin Popescu and Mitica Pricop won the gold in the C2 1000 m, defeating Leobaldo Pereira and

Ibrahim Rojas of Cuba. Germany and the Russian Federation battled for the bronze, with the German pair of Lars Kober and Stefan Utess too strong in the final stages.

Mens K1 500 m

The last day of racing got off to a terrible start, courtesy of Sydney's unseasonable weather. The wind and water lashed at competitors' boats, making it almost impossible to even get to the start line. The first race of the day was the men's K1 500 m. Bulgaria's Petar Merkov was beaten by his nemesis, Norway's Knut Holmann, by a margin of 0.546 seconds. Both men displayed great courage in a titanic finish as the weather showed no signs of slackening. The bronze medal was won by Israel's Michael Kolganov.

Mens K1 1000 m

There were many highlights at this regatta, but one of the best was the first race on Saturday 30 September – the men's K1 1000 m final. Argentina's Andres Correa got off to a fast start, but was slowly overhauled by Knut Holmann of Norway, who gradually drew away, while the Argentinean slipped to fifth. Holmann also edged out Bulgaria's Petar Merkov, by 1.38 seconds. After the race Holmann said, "It was my plan to go out fast and find my rhythm so I could just float along until I reached the 500 m mark. It worked."

The overjoyed bronze medallist, Tim Brabants of Great Britain, had more than one reason to celebrate. Not only had he taken the bronze, he had won Great Britain's first sprint medal.

Mens K2 500 m

As the men's K2 500 m rolled around, competitors had to compete against a 40 kph headwind and waves. The paddlers



STU FORSTER/SPORT



HAMISH BLAIR/SPORT

7. Previous page:
Competitors in the men's K4 500 m qualifying heats pass the Olympic rings, an area where the medal ceremonies will be held

8. Strong winds delayed the start of the final day of competition by four hours. Athletes leave the course to empty water from their kayaks after attempting a start in the men's K1 500 m

9. A spectator is pulled along by Andreas Dittmer of Germany after his successful race for gold in the men's C1 1000 m

10. Beniamino Bonomi and Antonio Rossi of Italy celebrate winning the gold medal in the men's K2 1000 m regatta

11. Florin Popescu and Mitica Pricop of Romania are the new gold medallists in the men's C2 1000 m



HAMISH BLAIR/SPORT

12



ALEXANDER ZEMLIANICHENKO/AP PHOTO

were called to the start three times before the race could begin. In a dramatic race, where competitors fought just as fiercely with one another as they did with the elements, the gold medal went to Hungarians Zoltan Kammerer and Botond Storcz, in a time of 1:47.055, 16 seconds slower than their heat time. The Australians, Andrew Trim and Daniel Collins, surged to the front near the finish, but Hungary came back to snatch the victory, 0.84 seconds in front. Germany's Ronald Rauhe and Tim Wieskoetter got the bronze. Trim later said, "It really wasn't a kayak race. That's about as far removed from a kayak race as we can get. It was nothing like I imagined the Olympic final to be. It was bloody horrible." His partner, Daniel Collins, gave his view, "In 12 years of international competition I've only had one worse race and I've never had conditions like they were today. But it was the same for everyone; we play an outdoor sport, you have to put up with it."

Men's K2 1000 m

Certainly the gold medal for enthusiasm belonged to Italy's Antonio Rossi and Beniamino Bonomi after this race. The Italian pair rowed a perfect race and led all the way, with Markus Oscarsson and Henrik Nilsson of Sweden second and Hungary a close third with Krisztian Bartfai and Krisztian Vereb. So ecstatic was Bonomi as the race finished that he stood up to salute the Italian supporters and fell overboard.

Men's K4 1000 m

The action was in lanes six, seven and eight in the final of the men's K4 1000 m. In a tight finish the Hungarian team from lane six narrowly defeated the German foursome. The Polish team just held off the Slovakian team for the bronze.

Women's K1 500 m

Not to be daunted by the poor weather conditions on the final day, the women's K1 500 m finalists lined up with Yugoslavia, South Africa, Sweden, Italy, Canada, Hungary,

Poland, Australia and Austria. Host country Australia had performed below expectations at these championships, and placed great hope in German-born, Gold Coast based Katrin Borchert. Already she had captured a bronze medal for her adopted country in the K2 500 m race in Atlanta. She repeated her Atlanta placing, finishing 1.29 seconds behind the gold medallist, Italy's Josefa Idem Guerrini. The silver medallist was Canada's Caroline Brunet.

Women's K2 500 m

The legendary Birgit Fischer and her partner Katrin Wagner won another gold medal for Germany in the K2 500 m. They clearly defeated Hungary's Katalin Kovacs and Szilvia Szabo, who only just held on to the silver from Poland's Aneta Pastuszka and Beata Sokolowska.

Women's K4 500 m

The women's K4 500 m final followed, an extremely tight race with only 0.414 seconds separating the gold and silver medallists. Germany (Birgit Fischer, Anett Schuck, Manuela Mucke, Katrin Wagner) won the gold, the silver going to Hungary and the bronze to Romania. With her victory, Germany's Birgit Fischer, nicknamed 'Supermum' by the press, 38 years of age and the mother of two, became one of the greatest Olympians of all time. She has won six gold medals and three silver medals at five Games, beginning in Moscow in 1980 as an 18-year-old. She might have achieved even more, but was denied an opportunity to compete in Los Angeles in 1984 because of her country's boycott. But she wasn't finished yet; she took her seventh gold medal the following day in the K2 500 m.

All in all, the stars in the sprints were Norway's Knut Holmann and Germany's Birgit Fischer, two amazing athletes, each finishing with two gold medals. The leading nations in sprints were Hungary and Germany, each finishing with seven medals.



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Canoe/Kayak

Volume Two
Chapter Five



12. After the start of the women's K1 500 m final was delayed for six hours due to winds, competitors at last line up for the race. After the stormy race, Italy's Josefa Idem Guerrini emerged as the winner

13. Birgit Fischer and Katrina Wagner of Germany wave to their fans after winning the gold medal in the women's K2 500 m. Fischer, in winning her seventh gold in Sydney, has become the leading medal winner in Olympic kayaking in a career that started in Moscow in 1980

14. Crowds, fed up by wind delays, cool down in the waters of the Regatta Centre and storm the podium



DARREN ENGLAND/ALLSPORT





CYCLING: MOUNTAIN BIKE

Mountain Bike Course, Fairfield City Farm 23–24 September 2000

Hip-hop music blared throughout Fairfield City Farm as the hipper, edgier cyclists tore around the Olympic mountain bike course. Mountain bike made its second appearance at an Olympic Games and the 30 000 spectators for the men's and women's events were enthralled at the speed, skill and sheer courage of the competitors as they fought for Olympic Games glory.

Fairfield City Farm is 32 km west of Olympic Park, located in a 350 ha block of regional parkland in Sydney's west. Prior to the Games the venue operated as a small working farm where city school children learned about their rural cousins. The 6.9 km circuit, all dull greens and rich browns, had been carved out of a typical chunk of hilly bushland. It swooped and swerved along narrow, sandy tracks between swaying gum trees. Riders had to negotiate Koala Ridge and Wombat Crossing and the treacherous Cauldron, which saw a few athletes thrown from their bikes and forced to retire.

Spectators and journalists were greeted at the venue by a white cockatoo in a cage, along with a sign promising emus, kangaroos, koalas, sheep and native fauna. International visitors may well have been alarmed rather than reassured when they picked up a 'City Farm Fact Sheet', giving advice on what to do if you came across a snake on the track, or were confronted by a swooping magpie.

The racing was spectacular, with favourites challenged and new champions emerging. As the spectators spread their blankets and fold-up chairs throughout the area in a picnic atmosphere, the tension of the athletes was a stark contrast.

Women's Competition

At precisely 1.00 pm on Saturday 23 September, 30 women lined up at the starting line and were allocated front or back positions, seeded according to their current world ranking. They would complete a gruelling 35.7 km over an elevation variation from sea level to 300 m before the day was done. Forty-two per cent of the course was climbing.

The physically and technically challenging course had been specifically designed to maximise visual impact for spectators and really stretch the athletes to their limit.

The sound of the starting gun interrupted the peaceful atmosphere. The pack had approximately two minutes to frantically tackle a gradual climb and jostle for a better position. The track which started off being wide enough for four or five riders abreast turned into a single track shortly after the start.

Suddenly, the riders hit the first of the obstacles, known as the Moguls, on the 6.9 km circuit. Some competitors were forced to dismount and push their bikes over the rocky outcrop. Others carried on, up over a tricky section of the course called Old Gum, riding over an old tree trunk which caused some of the riders to fall. Crossing areas such as Cockatoo Flats, Wombat Crossing and Footy Field, the terrain had a uniquely Australian nomenclature.

When riders were lapped during the race, they were only allowed to finish that lap and then had to retire from competition. A total of 27 of the 30 starters finished in the women's race, with riders giving it their all. At a time when mind and body were weary the need to concentrate on obstacles was great, as slipping on loose gravel or catching a back wheel in a rut could cost gold.

The current World Cup champion, Barbara Blatter of Switzerland, led for most of the women's race, but her strength did not last. Paola Pezzo of Italy made a daring pass on a downhill drop, overtaking the current world champion, Spain's Margarita Fullana, who was clipped and fell. With one lap to go, only those three were in the hunt for a medal, barring another fall or flat tyre. Pezzo, the



Cycling
Volume Two
Chapter Five



2

DOUG PENNINGALLSPORT



3

CRAIG SILLITOE/FAIRFAX

1. Jose Antonio Hermidale of Spain races past the media during the men's mountain biking at Fairfield City Farm

2. Spectators bring blankets and picnic baskets to enjoy not only the competition but also a day out

3. Paola Pezzo sinks to the ground after winning the women's race

4. Thirty competitors in the women's mountainbike competition set out on the first of seven laps in a 49.5 km race

Cycling
Volume Two
Chapter Five



ADAM PRETTYWALLSPORT

defending Olympic champion, made a break and increased her lead to pass the finish line well clear of the field in a time of 1:49:24.38. She grabbed an Italian flag just before the finish line, crossed herself and kissed the ground before hoisting her pink bike on her shoulders. "I made several errors in lap one but I've won and I'm ecstatic," she said. It was an exciting sprint finish for silver and bronze, with Barbara Blatter arriving 27.04 seconds later, closely chased by Margarita Fullana, who crossed the line another six seconds behind.

Men's Competition

The following day 49 men competed over 49.5 km. World champion Miguel Martinez of France relentlessly stuck to his own riding plan, breaking away on the last lap to win the men's competition and turn his Atlanta bronze into Sydney gold.

The 24-year-old shrugged off the initial domination of Swiss veteran Thomas Frischknecht to win in 2:09:02.50, just over a minute ahead of the pre-race favourite, Belgium's Filip Meirhaeghe, who took silver. The bronze medal went to Christoph Sauser of Switzerland as his Swiss team-mate Frischknecht faded towards the end of the twisting, dipping, seven-lap course.

Frischknecht had dominated for the first five laps, but Martinez claimed at no time was he concerned about the huge lead. "I had a riding plan, I was following it, and I wasn't worried," said the 165 cm Martinez, nicknamed Mighty Mouse. "I was third in Atlanta, and in the last four years, I thought of only one thing – to get the gold medal in Sydney."

When Frischknecht dropped off the pace the event turned into a two-man race between Martinez and Meirhaeghe. After the

race Martinez revealed that his father, a former Tour de France climber champion, had told him that Meirhaeghe would be the one to watch, and he was right.

Meirhaeghe said he was close to Martinez going into the final lap, "He had a little gap and passed me at the start of the last lap. I chased as hard as I could, but he went away from me. He was stronger on the last lap."



CRAIG SILLITOE/FAIRFAX

5. Thomas Frischknecht dominated most of the race, but fell back to sixth position in the last two laps

6. Frenchman Miguel Martinez savours the moment as he stands on the dais during the medal ceremony



CYCLING: ROAD

**Cycling Road Course, Centennial Parklands
26–30 September 2000**

In the east of Sydney's urban sprawl lies Centennial Park, an expansive green retreat; the home of lakes, cricket pitches, horse trails, cycling and roller blade tracks.

Both the cycling road race and time trials were held around the park on a course which offered spectators free viewing of the world's top cyclists as they whizzed past along the 17.1 km circuit. The women completed seven laps while the men covered 14 laps.

From the start line contestants headed north, turned into a newly constructed road across the top of Moore Park and circled south to Randwick. Then they travelled through the leafy suburbs around Centennial Park, pushed up the hill beside Queens Park, headed east towards the beach suburb of Bronte, travelled through Waverley and came back into Centennial Park. The time trials followed a similar route but skipped the long slog up the hill from Bronte.

Women's Road Race

On the first day of the road cycling competition, 26 September, the women competing in the road race were subject to the first of two downpours that hit the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. In dreadful conditions, all but eight of the 57 starters completed the full seven laps of the 119.7 km race, with slippery roads proving a hazard. The riders appeared undeterred by the driving rain and wind, however, maintaining an average speed of 38.51 km per hour.

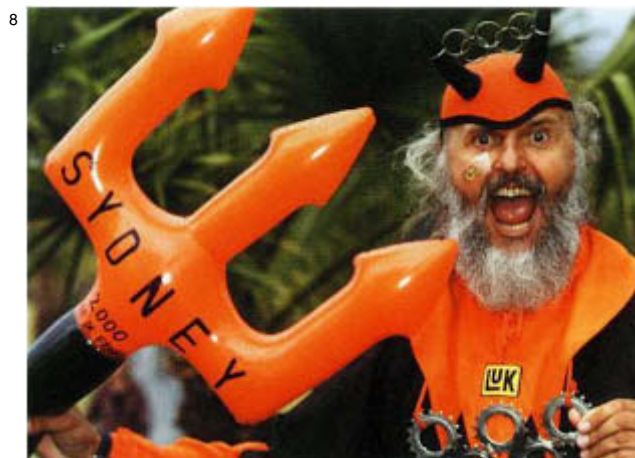
Leontien Zijlaard of the Netherlands was the first across the line in 3:06:31. Usually recognised as the glamorous face of the sport, she was covered from head to toe in mud as she raised her arms in victory. It was the second of three gold medals of these Olympic Games for Zijlaard, who dominated the cycling. She had already taken gold in the individual pursuit, where she set world and Olympic records and won silver in the point race.

In an extremely close finish, the next 23 competitors came in so close that they were each credited the same time as the winner. Hanka Kupfernagel of Germany took silver with Diana Ziliute of Lithuania claiming bronze. Unfortunately for the women, the crowds were sparse, due to the inclement weather.

Men's Road Race

Mother Nature was kinder to the men as they started their road race the next day, 27 September, in perfect conditions. Far larger crowds lined the surrounding streets to watch the world's best cycle by. These cycling celebrities provided a



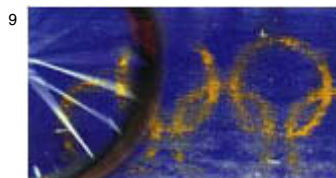


PATRICK KOVARIK/AFP

8 circling kaleidoscope of colour as the 154-strong field headed off in the mass start. Some spectators simply leaned over the front fences of their houses; others watched from the balconies of apartments. Crowds gathered around television sets in nearby cafes so that they could see the entire race, sipping their capuccinos and cheering the athletes as they fleetingly passed by.

The majority of spectators spilled into the surrounds of the parklands, either with friends, walking the dog or on their own more modest bicycles. An estimated global television audience of 600 million viewers saw the top riders from the Tour de France complete what was dubbed the scenic Tour de Sydney'.

Jan Ullrich of Germany won the 239.4 km race, beating Alexandre Vinokourov of Kazakhstan and German team-mate Andreas Kloeden. He attacked the course during the steep climb on the 13th of 14 laps, before winning in a time of 5:29:08, with a margin of 0:09 seconds. Although representing different countries, all three medal winners were under contract to the same professional team. Throughout the race, team tactics



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7. Previous page: Leontien Zijlaard wins the women's road race

8. A cycling fan, nicknamed 'El Diabolo' cheers on competitors during the women's road race

9. The first rain of the Sydney Games hit during the women's road race and cyclists had to deal with wet surfaces and puddles of water

10. Lance Armstrong waits in the pack at the start of the men's road race

11. The men's road race winds its way through the beachside suburb of Bronte



JULIAN ANDREWS/FAIRFAX

played an important part as riders talked to each other to determine the most appropriate time to sprint, break away, or ride with the pack.

Time Trial

A few days later riders again donned their aerodynamic helmets and mounted their bikes of carbon fibre, titanium, aluminium or lightweight steel for the time trials. Most riders had brought numerous bikes as the handlebars allowed for these trials were much lower than those for the road race, with gears positioned differently.

This was only the second time since 1932 that the individual time trials had been included as an Olympic event and many of the competitors were the same as those who had competed in the road race. They ranged in age from 19 to 41 years; heights from 1.50 m to 1.93 m and weights from 48 kg to 89 kg. But they all shared one trait; they had come to compete at the highest level in their sport and none lacked determination as their legs and hearts pumped relentlessly over the varying distances. With no drafting allowed and seldom another competitor in sight for most of the time, they raced against the clock, effortlessly changing gears with virtually no upper body movement as they held their bikes steadily on course.

Unlike the mass start for the road race, with aggressive jostling for position, time trial cyclists left at orderly 90-second intervals. Prior to that, officials checked the measurements of their bikes and ensured there were no cracks in the helmets or any sponsorship logos appearing on the cyclist or the support vehicle. Each rider entered an electronic gate on a slight incline while the official starter held the bike in place and the rider's eyes focused straight ahead. Then they were off, with the support vehicles following at least 25 m behind as coaches shouted instructions and the riders pumped doggedly to propel the thin high-pressure wheels around the course.

Women's Individual Time Trial

In the women's individual time trial on 30 September, road race gold medallist Leontien Zijlaard of the Netherlands did what no other cyclist had done before, when she won a third gold and fourth medal at a single Olympic Games. She convincingly won the two-lap, 31.2 km trial in 42:00 minutes flat. In relentlessly strong cycling, she was a clear 37 seconds ahead of Mari Holden of the USA and 52 seconds ahead of bronze medallist 41-year-old veteran Jeannie Longo-Ciprelli of France, who was impressively competing in her fifth Olympic Games. Zijlaard increased her lead at every intermediate time check before powering home, with the bright orange colour of the Netherlands' team filling her rear wheel. "If someone would have told me I would win three gold medals in the Olympics I wouldn't have believed it!" Zijlaard said after the race.

Men's Individual Time Trial

On the same day, beginning at noon, the first of three waves set off on the last cycling event of the 2000 Olympic Games,

12



DOUG PENSINGER/ALLSPORT

Reaching speeds over 80 kph, riders were oblivious to the normal road traffic signs along the route – which cautioned no speed in excess of 40 kph. At the finish line, the noise of the media helicopters above was so loud that the commentator could barely be heard as photo journalists jockeyed for positions almost as fiercely as the riders had on the course.

It was Ekimov's second gold medal, the first won in 1988 in the team pursuit. Asked to compare the two, he commented, "This is a top honour for a sportsman. It's like being on Everest." Further pressed by the media to articulate how it felt to beat two-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong, Ekimov graciously added, "To me, Lance Armstrong is a hero."

Pre-race favourite Armstrong, representing the USA, who races on the same professional team as the Russian, finished with a bronze. He commented, "There are no excuses. I gave it everything. I got third place. Two riders were ahead of me and they were better than me today." Given a low chance of survival from cancer four years ago, Armstrong is not just one of sport's most inspirational stories but one of life's.

the men's individual time trial. Cooled by light winds, record crowds turned out on a sunny Sydney Saturday to see the riders cover three laps, a total distance of 46.8 km.

Thirty-four-year-old Viacheslav Ekimov of the Russian Federation, with his movie star good looks, set the fastest time and won the gold medal. Affectionately known as Eki, he finished in 57:40 at an average speed of 48.69 kph.

Jan Ullrich of Germany won silver in the individual time trial and was content that he'd won gold in the road race. "I'm totally happy with my Olympics. I hadn't expected to get a medal here," he said.

Although there was not the prize money that these athletes have become accustomed to, the pride and glory of winning an Olympic medal was more than enough incentive for each rider to compete at his maximum level.

Cycling

Volume Two
Chapter Five



12. Locals gathered along the route to see Olympic cycling legends zoom past

13. Viacheslav Ekimov rides to a surprise victory in the individual time trial. His victory gave the Russian Federation its first cycling gold since 1988

14. Lance Armstrong (left), Viacheslav Ekimov (centre) and Jan Ullrich pose for photographers after the individual time trial



13

MIKE POWELL/ALLSPORT



14

MIKE POWELL/ALLSPORT



CYCLING: TRACK

Dunc Gray Velodrome, Bankstown

16–21 September 2000

A sense of expectation was evident among the crowd at the Dunc Gray Velodrome. Favourite for the women's sprint, Felicia Ballanger from France, had suffered a surprise loss to the Russian Federation's Oxana Grichina in the second heat of the best-of-three final. Grichina, who finished fifth in the women's sprint in Atlanta, led out in the deciding heat at a snail's pace, with Ballanger trailing, and came to a halt high up on the velodrome. Just as Grichina, struggling to remain stationary, took her eyes off Ballanger, the French rider surged past and was never threatened in a long, two-lap sprint home. Ballanger's move epitomised many of the elements of track cycling – nerve, strength, speed and craft. For Ballanger, it was another personal triumph, having already won the previous Olympic women's sprint, a host of world championship sprints and time trials, as well as the Olympic women's 500 m time trial four days earlier. After the event, Ballanger confessed that "I had started doubting myself, and you can lose it in a flash when that happens". Her gold medal was evidence that she had overcome that self-doubt. There is no room in a cyclist's mind for doubt when they are flying at speeds of over 70 kph around a wooden track.

Track cycling was included in the 1896 Olympic Games in Athens. Most of the original events, including a 12-hour race (only two riders finished) have been culled, but the 1000 m sprint still survives. The venue for the 2000 Olympic Games track cycling was named after the first Australian cyclist to win a gold medal at the Olympic Games, Edgar 'Dunc' Gray, who won in Los Angeles in 1932, after securing the bronze medal in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games. The Dunc Gray Velodrome was opened in 1999 and hosted the 1999 Oceania Championships. The highlight of the design from a spectator's point of view must be the amphitheatre-style seating that places each of the 6000 spectators as close to the track as possible. For six days, exquisitely honed elite cyclists, on equally streamlined bicycles, raced around the 250 m Baltic pine track at speeds that made the audience gasp.

Men's 1 km Time Trial

The first finals took place in the evening of Day 1 with the men's 1 km time trial and the women's 500 m time trial. The time trial has no heats, no opponent on the track and no second chances. The only tactic is to record the fastest possible time. The first event produced an upset as Britain's Jason Queally set an Olympic record time of 1:01.609. German Stefan Nimke finished second, with Australian Shane Kelly, the silver medallist at Barcelona whose foot fell out of the pedal in Atlanta, third. Reigning world champion Arnaud Tournant of France, who rode last, finished fifth.

16



PATRICK KOVARIK/REUTERS

Queally set the third fastest times at the first and second lap splits, but powered home in the final two laps. It was a triumph for Queally, who had only seriously taken up cycling some three years ago after previously being involved in water polo and triathlon.

Women's 500 m Time Trial

The women's 500 m time trial made its debut as an Olympic event at Sydney. French rider Felicia Ballanger was favourite for the gold medal, and she duly responded, establishing the Olympic record at 34.140, more than half a second faster than silver medallist Michelle Ferris, 34.696, of Australia. Chinese rider Jiang Cuihua finished third with a time of 34.768. As it was a debut event, the first rider, Daniela Larreal of Venezuela, set the first Olympic record for the event, but it was short lived, being broken another three times before Ballanger's ride.

Men's Individual Pursuit

This event was won convincingly by German Robert Bartko, who also set an Olympic record time of 4:18.515 as he pushed fellow countryman Jens Lehmann into second place. Earlier, in the qualifying round, Bartko had set an Olympic record time of 4:18.972. Bartko was heavily favoured to win gold, but Lehmann led in the early stages, only to see Bartko overpower him as the race wore on. In the ride-off for the bronze medal, Britain's Rob Hayles led Australian Brad McGee for the majority of the race before McGee, encouraged by an enthusiastic and partisan crowd, clawed his way back and moved ahead in the final lap to claim the bronze medal.

Men's Olympic Sprint

The men's Olympic sprint was another event debuting at the Olympic Games. Comprising three members each, the teams race in pursuit style over 750 m. At the end of each of the first two laps, one rider drops off each team, leaving the anchor rider to complete the final lap. In the gold medal race, the French team of Laurent Gane, Florian Rousseau and Arnaud Tournant defeated the British trio of Chris Hoy, Craig MacLean and Jason Queally. The French established the

Olympic record time of 44.233 after earlier setting the fastest qualifying time. France has dominated this event in recent years, winning the past three world championships. Tournant, world record holder in the 1 km time trial, anchored the French team and gained consolation for his disappointing performance the previous evening. In the ride-off for the bronze medal, the Australian team of Sean Eadie, Darryn Hill and Gary Neiwand posted a time of 45.161 to defeat the Greek team of Lampros Vasilopoulos, Dimitrios Georgalis and Kleantlis Bargkas.

Women's Individual Pursuit

Dutch rider Leontien Zijlaard provided one of the most convincing performances of any event in the women's individual pursuit. Zijlaard increased her lead on almost every lap over the silver medallist, reigning world champion Marion Clignet of France. Zijlaard set an Olympic record in the qualifying round, then a world record of 3:30.816 in the semifinal, and she relaxed visibly during the latter stages of the final, punching the air with one hand as she crossed the finish line. Even with a slower time of 3:33.360, she defeated Clignet by over five seconds. The ride-off for the bronze medal featured an exciting tussle between eventual winner Yvonne McGregor of Great Britain and New Zealand's Sarah Ulmer. Ulmer started out the faster and developed a lead which she maintained until the final lap, when McGregor passed her. McGregor, at 39 the oldest woman ever to win an Olympic medal in this sport, won by only .08 seconds.

Men's Team Pursuit

The men's 4000 m team pursuit resulted in one of the most dramatic performances of the program. The Ukrainian team set a world record of 4:00.830 in their semifinal against the British. Their opponents in the final, the Germans, had been ahead of the Ukrainian time over the first 2000 m in their semifinal, before relaxing on their way to an easy victory over their French opponents. In the final the Germans, Guido Fulst, Robert Bartko, Daniel Becke and Jens Lehmann, were



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Cycling
Volume Two
Chapter Five



RUSSELL BOYCE/REUTERS

15. Opposite page: The Australian team races in the men's team pursuit

16. Felicia Ballanger grimaces on her way to gold in the 500 m time trial, setting an Olympic record to add to her 1998 world record

17. Yvonne McGregor wins the bronze medal in the individual pursuit

18. The gold-medal winning German team rides in the men's pursuit race

19. French coach Jacky Mourioux shouts out times as his team passes him during the team pursuit qualifying heats



PEDRO UGARTE/APF

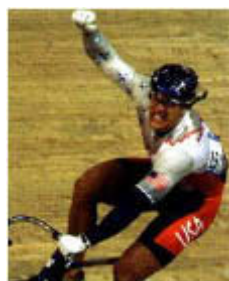
19

Cycling
Volume Two
Chapter Five



20. Marty Nothstein celebrates his sprint gold
21. Sean Eadie of Australia and Jan van Eiden compete in the first round of the sprint race

20



MARK DAVISWELL/SPORT

in invincible form, and on their way to the gold medal set a new world record when they became the first team to go under the 4-minute mark. It was a dual triumph for Bartko and Lehmann, who had won gold and silver respectively in the men's individual pursuit two days earlier. The Ukrainian team of Oleksandr Fedenko, Oleksandr Symonenko, Sergiy Matveyev and Sergiy Chernyavskyy were unable to match their semifinal performance and were almost four seconds slower. The British team of Bryan Steel, Paul Manning, Bradley Wiggins and Chris Newton convincingly defeated the French in the ride-off for the bronze medal.

Women's Sprint

As described earlier, Felicia Ballanger provided one of the defining moments of the track cycling program by taking the opportunity that presented itself in a split second. Oxana Grichina of the Russian Federation won the silver, and Ukrainian Iryna Yanovych defeated Michelle Ferris of Australia in the bronze medal race in straight heats.

Men's Sprint

Marty Nothstein won the men's sprint and provided the USA's only track cycling medal. Nothstein defeated Florian Rousseau of France in straight heats, and so added the gold medal to the silver he gained in Atlanta in 1996. Nothstein set the fastest qualifying time, clocking an average speed of

70.824 kph, and looked in command during all stages of the event. He reversed the result of the final in Atlanta when he defeated German Jens Fiedler in straight heats in the semifinal. Fiedler subsequently took the bronze medal when he comfortably defeated Laurent Gane of France in the ride-off for third place. Nothstein's superiority in the sprint made him favourite for the final event on the program, the men's keirin, as he was clearly the fastest rider over 250 m. Nothstein was gracious in victory, describing beaten finalist Rousseau as "a world class athlete and a world champion".

Men's Points Race

The focus shifted from individual performance and one-on-one confrontations to the spectacle of a mass of riders on the track with the points races. These races excited the crowd as riders employed a range of tactics, ranging from contesting the sprints to attempting to lap the rest of the field, while avoiding medal-ending collisions. Former world champion Juan Llaneras of Spain used the lapping strategy to secure victory. Llaneras picked up a total of 14 points during the competition, as well as picking up another nine points during the race. Although he finished behind the silver medallist, Uruguayan Milton Wynants, 18, and the bronze medallist, the Russian Federation Alexey Markov, 16, on points, Llaneras lapped eight riders once, and twice lapped the other 17 riders.

Women's Points Race

Similarly, the women's points race was an exciting affair. Unlike the men's race, the gold medal was decided on points. The winner, Italy's Antonella Bellutti, performed consistently throughout the event, placing first in one sprint, second in four sprints, and fourth in the double-points last sprint to finish with 19 points. Winner of the women's individual pursuit, Leontien Zijlaard of the Netherlands, finished second with 16 points, placing first in two sprints and gaining six points on the last double-points sprint. The Russian Federation's Olga Slioussareva set up an early lead by winning the first and third sprints, ending on 15 points and finishing with the bronze medal. There were few attempts by riders to break away and gain a lap on the rest of the field, and none was successful.

Men's Madison

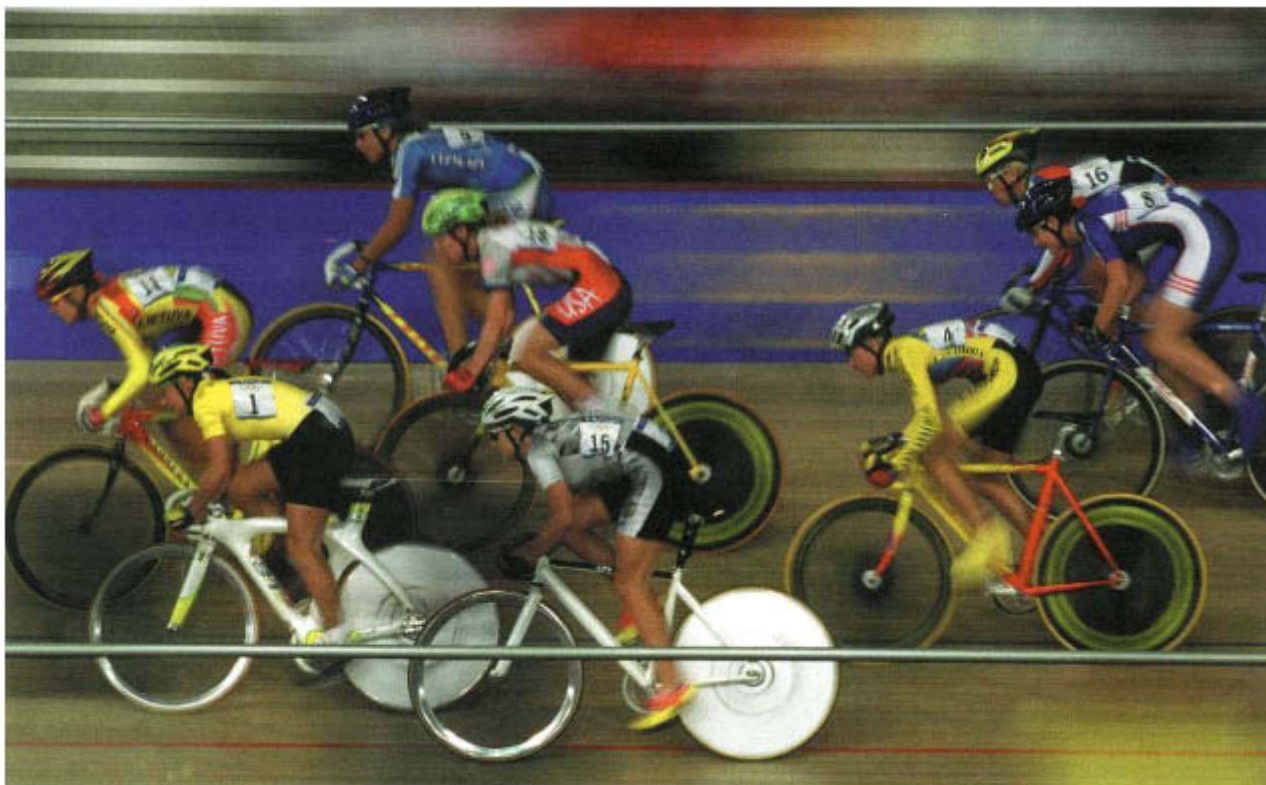
The last two races on the track cycling program were both debuting at the Olympic Games. The men's madison, raced over 240 laps, resulted in a win to the Australian duo of Scott McGrory and Brett Aitken, 26 points, delighting the crowd which witnessed Australia's first Olympic gold medal on the track since 1984. With 28 cyclists on the track at any one time, the Australian pair used impeccable teamwork and timing to score points consistently throughout the race. By the last of the 12 sprints they had an unassailable points lead. The Belgian pair of Matthew Gilmore and Etienne de Wilde finished strongly, winning the last sprint, to reach 22 points and gain the silver. Italy's Marco Villa and Silvio Martinello, with 15 points, edged the British team for the bronze. There was an unfortunate collision towards the end of the penultimate lap which ended the British team's hopes of a medal.

21



MIKE HEWITT/SPORT

22



SHAUN BOTTERILL/SPORT

Cycling
Volume Two
Chapter Five



23

PAUL HANNAREUTERS

Men's Keirin

The final event was the 2000 m men's keirin. It featured the top sprinters and was probably the closest and most exciting finish of all the events. Legendary Japanese sprinter Koichi Nakano, a former ten-time world sprint champion from 1977–1986, was honoured by leading out the sprinters for the opening laps on a specially designed motorised pace bicycle, replacing the usual derny-pacer. The keirin was developed in Japan, and is notorious for the jostling that occurs just prior to the derny-pacer leaving the track, two and a half laps from the finish. The six finalists included three sprint world champions – Marty Nothstein of the USA, Florian Rousseau of France and Australian veteran Gary Neiwand.

At the beginning, Neiwand, placed high on the track, pressed to the lead, the riders remaining in the same order until the derny exited. Germany's Jens Fiedler then mounted an attack, to which Neiwand responded. With 50 m to go Neiwand led on the bend and looked certain to hold off the challenges of Rousseau and Fiedler, but Rousseau, with exquisite timing, surged past him on the line to win by the narrowest of margins, Fiedler finishing a close third. Nothstein, strongly favoured after his gold medal in the sprint, finished fifth.

France had clearly emerged as the leading track cycling nation with four gold medals and two silver, followed by Germany with two gold, two silver and two bronze. Six countries had shared the other six medals, and in all, 13 countries had shared the 36 medals in total. Host country Australia secured six medals in all, equal in total to France and Germany.

By all measures the track cycling had been a wonderful spectacle. World records had been set, seasoned champions had triumphed, outsiders had risen and ridden to Olympic

glory. The setting had been perfect. The closeness of the spectators to the event resulted in an electric connection between competitor and spectator. The crowd was in awe and excited by the cyclists' performances and in turn the spectators' excitement seemed to energise the participants to greater performance. All the times will be permanently recorded but they cannot convey the sense of excitement that was present. Every gold medal performance was unforgettable. Each exemplified one or more of the defining characteristics of cycling, such as the raw speed of Marty Nothstein, the precision of the German pursuit team, the split second judgement of Felicia Ballanger, the timing of Florian Rousseau, and the will to win of Leontien Zijlaard.

22. Rasa Mazeikyte of Lithuania leads in the women's point race, with Alayna Burns of Australia following close on her heels

23. Antonella Bellutti, who went on to win the points race, consults with her coach Dario Broccardo

24. Australians Scott McGrory and Brett Aitken pleased the home crowd with their win in the madison final



24

PHIL HILL/ARDNEWS LTD





EQUESTRIAN

**Sydney International Equestrian Centre, Horsley Park
16 September–1 October 2000**

The Opening Ceremony of the 2000 Olympic Games began with the roaring entry of over a hundred Australian men and women riding stockhorses. This unforgettable scene encapsulated the special place the horse has in Australian folklore. From that moment the equestrian events of the Sydney 2000 Games were guaranteed to capture the hearts and minds of the nation. They also gained approval from the competitive equestrian community of the world.

Obviously equestrian events, unique as they are, centre upon the synergy between horse and rider. A third group of factors also has a central role: the various courses, arenas and jumps that make up the major adversary. Travelling the 40 km west from the centre of Sydney to the equestrian venue at Horsley Park, the first impression one got of the Sydney International Equestrian Centre was of its sheer size and colour. The complex was set harmoniously in 80 ha of typical Australian hilly grassland, dotted with gum trees. The cross-country course that swept around a central hill for 7.5 km was indicated by the occasional pointed marquee that made the course resemble a mediaeval battlefield. This proved to be more than a flight of fancy for some during the cross country section of the two three-day events.

The Horsley Park complex, designed by Timothy Court, will be a wonderful legacy of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Much of the array of buildings will disappear but 'The Shed',

the Central Arena and, of course, Michael Etherington-Smith's unique cross-country course will be an everlasting reminder of this wonderful fortnight of Olympic equestrian competition. The course will become part of a local park and can be re-established for future events as and when required.

Team Three-Day Event

The event antipodean riders have made their own in recent years, the team three-day event, started with the Australians taking the lead after four excellent dressage performances. Andrew Hoy, who was to become Australia's greatest equestrian gold medallist following the home nation's victory in this event, rode Darien Powers and scored a record-breaking 30.60 in penalties. Stuart Tinney, on the difficult 13-year-old Jeepster, also performed amazingly well, scoring 36 penalties.

The exuberant sell-out crowd was animated in their support and needed to be encouraged by officials to adhere to traditional decorum. Great Britain ended the first day in second position. New Zealand's Mark Todd, riding in his last competition, had a forgettable passage, with the 16 500 fans' loud applause apparently upsetting Diamond Hall Red.

Over 50 000 spectators positioned themselves around the cross country course and steeplechase circuit for the second stage of the team three-day event. The scene from the central hill was magnificent with all reaches being easily visible. The dedicated followers tramped the whole course, watching a few riders at one fence before moving to the next. This made for a challenging day's sport for spectators as well as riders.

The focus of the second stage in eventing tends to be almost exclusively on the cross country course (phase D) where riders are expected to cover 25 km without penalties or errors. However, horse and rider also have to negotiate two road and track sections (phases A and C), as well as three laps of nine fences on the steeplechase course (phase B).

Equestrian
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Andrew Hoy on Darien Powers after winning the team three-day event
2. Equipment at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre
3. Stuart Tinney on Jeepster clears Pemulwuy's Waterhole on his way to team gold



2

KIERAN MADDENS/OOOG



3

MIKE HEWITT/ALLSPORT

Equestrian
Volume Two
Chapter Five



4. Ian Stark trudges out of the water after coming off Jaybee during the team three-day event

5. Andrew Hoy, Phillip Dutton, Matt Ryan and Stuart Tinney (from left to right) are celebrated by enthusiastic crowds after their team victory

6. Pippa Funnell and Rock soar over an obstacle on their way to silver in the team three-day event



MIKE HEWITT/ALLSPORT



CARSTEN REHDER/AFP



AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

In the heat of Horsley Park the 25 km proved to be too much for some competitors, several being disqualified or withdrawn, while others failed to pass the rigorous veterinary inspection the morning before the jumping on the final day.

The Australian team's traditional dominance in cross country brought them to their accustomed leading position at the conclusion of the second day. With all four horses and riders surviving, they led Great Britain by 12.5 points. The fourth British rider, Ian Stark on Jaybee, fell at fence 10 – Pemulwuy's Water Hole.

Interestingly, Pemulwuy was a local Aboriginal resistance fighter who fought against the British in the 1790s. He was captured, executed and beheaded by them in 1802. Ian Stark must have wished Pemulwuy's revenge had been gained a century earlier! New Zealand, 27 points away from Australia, ended the day in third position.

An azure blue sky and a temperature of 28°C welcomed the competitors for the final day of the team three-day event. The expectant sell-out crowd, with varying degrees of understanding of the event, came to witness Australia gain a hat-trick of team golds in three successive Olympic Games. The jumping phase, Australia's worst discipline, duly provided the audience with suitable drama. The excitable crowd did not assist Australia's first rider, Matthew Ryan on Kibah Sandstone. In one nervous round he relinquished the team's entire lead.

Germany's Andreas Dibowski on Leonas Dancer, with an excellent round, immediately demonstrated the Europeans' strengths. The lead changed after Australia's Phillip Dutton on House Doctor took three rails and a time fault in his round. It was now the traditional sporting adversaries, Great Britain

against Australia, for the gold. The restraint and polite display of excitement by the British team's grooms, officials and horse owners summed up this sport's excellent ethos. Stuart Tinney on Jeepster then had a tremendous round with only a single rail down and no time penalties, giving him his best ever three-day score of 41 points.

The pressure then turned to Britain's Pippa Funnell, who took two rails and had three time faults. Andrew Hoy was left with virtually a free ride for gold and despite hitting three rails Australian won, 14.2 points clear of Great Britain, with the USA winning the bronze, thanks to David O'Connor's clear jumping round.

The celebrations of the four Australia horsemen teased the exuberant home supporters, who roared for more as the winners took several celebratory laps of honour. Their final lap included a synchronised jump over the carpet leading to the dais. For Andrew Hoy the win took him into the Hall of Fame for Australian gold medallists, with his third consecutive gold in the event.

Individual Three-day Event

Before 1996, when the individual and team three-day events were run concurrently, Stuart Tinney's 41 points would have won him the individual gold. However, the now separately conducted individual event was virtually won on the first day, when the USA's David O'Connor rode an impeccable Olympic record dressage round of 29 on his Irish-bred gelding Custom Made. O'Connor's fantastic round was followed by that of Germany's Marina Koehncke, 34.80 on Longchamps and, surprising all, Olympic debutante Heidi Antikatzidis, 37.40, the first athlete to represent Greece in Olympic equestrian

events, riding the exuberant Michaelmas. Antipodean veterans Mark Todd of New Zealand and Andrew Hoy of Australia lurked inevitably in medal contention. Todd's fellow New Zealander Blyth Tait, on Welton Envoy, seemed to be well placed, but the second day's arduous stages were to prove his undoing, as they did for several others.

Several riders and horses were injured on the telling cross country course and many parted company, including Australia's Amanda Ross on Otto Schumaker at the rather innocuous 27th fence, known as the Dog Kennel. Amid the failures on the cross country course, David O'Connor went clear, as did Heidi Antikatzidis, who will undoubtedly be a star of the future. The veterans Andrew Hoy and Mark Todd maintained their inevitable march to the medals without further penalties. Only ten riders finished the second day without penalty.

On the third day the capacity crowd was swollen by the hordes of team support staff and officials, plus volunteers, who gathered to watch the last four jump for the medal. The jumping course for this event was tighter and the 13 jumps all seemed to be more imposing than those for the teams event. Andrew Hoy, on the much-vilified Swizzle In, was outstanding, jumping boldly and going clear. The drama increased as New Zealand's Mark Todd responded by taking Eyespy II clear, but for his caution he gained three time faults. The gold was still a possibility for Andrew Hoy but first Greece's Heidi Antikatzidis had to jump. Whether fatigued or anxious, she and Michaelmas could not perform when it counted. Anitakzidis gained 13 penalties and crashed to sixth position with 50.4. So Hoy was second, Todd third, with David O'Connor of the USA still to jump.

The crowd was hushed as Custom Made picked its way rather scrappily but effectively round the arena, receiving just five penalties, but David O'Connor's wonderful dressage round of 29.00 kept him 5.8 ahead of Andrew Hoy. O'Connor



7

MARK DADSWELL/ALLSPORT

and Custom Made were the stars of the event and received a wonderful reception. Legendary New Zealander Mark Todd, double gold medal winner and the International Equestrian Federation's Rider of the 20th Century, graced the Olympic arena for the last time, winner of the bronze.

Dressage

From the all-round athleticism and skills of eventing, focus turned to the precision and artistry of the dressage arena. Centuries of breeding, tradition and competition have made this event almost the exclusive domain of European riders and horses. In dressage there are both individual and team competitions. In the individual event there are three rounds. All riders compete in the first round, the grand prix. This also



8

PALANI MOHAN/FARFAX



9

SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT

7. Ian Stark aboard Arakai during the dressage section of the individual three-day event
8. Donnizetti, Andrea Verdina's companion in the individual three-day event is iced down
9. David O'Connor and Custom Made celebrate their victory after a nail-biting finish in the individual three-day event

Equestrian
Volume Two
Chapter Five



RYAN GORMLY/SPORT THE LIBRARY

doubles as the team competition, the best three scores from each team of four being added to decide the standings.

The top 25 riders from the grand prix qualify for the grand prix special, then the top 15 from the first two rounds go on to the final round, the grand prix freestyle. Individual dressage medals are based on the combined scores for the three rounds.

The team dressage was expected to be a direct contest between Germany and the Netherlands. Germany was seeking its fifth consecutive team gold. In dressage the Germans and the Dutch still function at a totally different level to all other nations. For once, events faithfully followed the script and Germany claimed gold. The Netherlands easily kept the USA at bay to take silver.

Isabell Werth of Germany, riding the veteran champion Gigolo, entered the grand prix special with a massive 1908 points, 76.32 per cent, with Anky van Grunsven of the Netherlands, riding Bonfire, second on 1875 points, 75 per cent. It looked as if Gigolo was to maintain his longtime dominance over Bonfire, but the Dutch horse's time had at last arrived.

If there are stellar personalities in the equestrian world, Isabell Werth and Anky van Grunsven must rank high amongst them. Their domination of the dressage events continued at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. In the second round, the grand prix special, van Grunsven and Bonfire scored 2.46 points better than Werth and Gigolo and the Dutch horse and rider went into the last leg with a lead of 1.14 points.

A captivated capacity audience witnessed a delightful day's freestyle event. Bonfire's animated yet poetic precision display won the individual dressage gold for van Grunsven, ahead of an unusually reticent Gigolo. Perhaps he sensed that this was the end of his illustrious international career.

Bonfire's dramatic interpretation earned a world record for van Grunsven with 86.05 per cent. Werth rode Gigolo to the appropriately titled compilation 'Gigolo's Journey' – it was in fact the last stage of a memorable journey.

Despite being required to restart her round, Ulla Salzgeber of Germany on Rusty produced a magical ride to overtake her compatriot Nadine Capellmann for bronze. Capellmann was also affected by a technical problem but could not regather her poise as well as Salzgeber and faltered to drop to fourth

position. The medals awarded, the crowd tarried awhile like a theatre audience lingering after a Broadway musical, wanting more from the artists.

The freestyle to music demonstrated the range that equestrian events now offer: from the endurance and strength needed to overcome the second day in eventing to the grace of freestyle. It must now be an established part of Olympic equestrianism.

Team Jumping

Germany also reasserted its dominance in the team jumping events. Their team of Ludger Beerbaum (Goldfever 3), Lars Nieberg (Espirit FRH), Otto Becker (Cento) and Marcus Ehning (For Pleasure), with 15 penalties, won the gold in a tremendous battle against Switzerland by a single penalty point. Brazil prevailed for the bronze in an exciting time jump-off against France, after both had incurred 24 penalty faults.

Individual Jumping

As the crowd was massing at the Olympic Stadium to attend the closing of this magnificent Olympic Games, and as the marathon runners were approaching the Stadium, further



CHRISTINE NEBBITT/AP PHOTO

10. A near-capacity crowd of 19 500 follows the dressage events

11. Three laughing winners: Anky van Grunsven (centre) with silver medallist Isabell Werth (left) and Ulla Salzgeber, bronze medallist in the individual dressage

12. Anky van Grunsven on Bonfire in the individual dressage Grand Prix



12

HAMISH BLAIR/ALLSPORT

west the blue ribbon event of the equestrian competition, the individual jumping, was drawing to a frantic conclusion. It had appeared after the first round that 'God was in His heaven' and that the unbeatable favourite, world champion Rodrigo Pessoa from Brazil on Baloubet Du Rouet, having no faults, was on his way to winning his country's first Olympic equestrian gold medal. But there was to be no Brazilian magic.

Remarkably, Pessoa seemed to be completely out of synch with Baloubet Du Rouet in the last round, atypically knocking down the first fence. This unsettled the horse and after he refused the eighth jump, the champion pair was eliminated.

Three riders were tied on four faults after the final round: Jeroen Dubbeldam on Sjiem and Albert Voorn on Lando, both of the Netherlands, and Khaled Al Eid of Saudi Arabia on Khashm Al Aan. As if all the drama had been exhausted, the jump-off ended promptly with Sjiem going clear while Lando and Khashm Al Aan both took one rail; with Albert Voorn taking Lando around faster, the Netherlands won both the gold and silver and Saudi Arabia bronze.

So an exciting Olympic competition closed. The complex looked almost sad that it had all ended. Though utterly exhausted, all concerned would certainly have felt flat when they woke the next day with no competition to attend. But for the grooms, the venue staff and, of course, the horses, the work would continue.

Going behind the scenes and seeing the extent of the work of the many support staff, from volunteers to veterinarians, one realises how much goes into a single horse's performance. The credit given and open gratitude expressed by medal winners to their support teams at Horsley Park demonstrated how equestrian events are very much a team sport.

The Horsley Park Complex, which cost A\$37 million to establish, had a core area covering over 80 ha, including specialised facilities such as stables, yards, training arenas,



13

Equestrian
Volume Two
Chapter Five



CHRISTINE NESBITT/AP PHOTO

grooms' accommodation and administrative centres. It was clearly the most expansive Olympic venue. Australian national equestrian administrators are almost salivating at the prospect of having it as their base, with it becoming, as coach Wayne Roycroft suggests, 'the heart and soul' of Australian equestrianism. When this happens, the complex will come back to life again.



14

BOB PETERS/OLYMPIC CO-ORDINATION AUTHORITY

23. Quieter moments during Olympic competition: a German rider and his horse in the practice arena
14. The Sydney International Equestrian Centre is an important legacy for the Australian equestrian community





FENCING

**Sydney Exhibition Centre, Halls 4 and 5, Darling Harbour
16–24 September 2000**

Many believe that, like the three musketeers, the best sword fighters in the world come from France. But the fencing competition at Sydney 2000 saw the changing of the world guard as new countries emerged to challenge the traditional fencing powerhouses of Europe.

Nowhere was this more obvious than in the final of the men's individual foil. Kim Young-Ho of Korea was not expected to feature at the Games. Prior to Sydney the best result from Korean fencers at an Olympic Games was advancing to round 16. To change this, Kim went to Europe to study his principal rivals and how to best use his smaller physique.

"The European men all have long arms. I don't. I discovered the trick is to just get down low when they are about to strike and get in first. For three months I went to Europe for every competition big or small. I was determined to master the tactics of fencing against Europeans," Kim said.

The tactics worked remarkably well. Kim moved through to the final round with ease. In the quarterfinals he defeated the favourite for the gold medal, Sergiy Golubytsky of Ukraine. The semifinal was fought at a ferocious pace with just 2:40 minutes of the nine minutes fencing time used. Kim showed again his skill and determination in the semifinals, downing eventual bronze medal winner Dmitri Chevchenko of the Russian Federation.

In the final Kim faced Germany's Ralf Bissdorf. Kim began aggressively and seemed assured of victory when he needed just one more hit for gold at 14–11. Bissdorf answered with three straight touches, but finally conceded gold when he answered Kim's attack with a counterattack rather than a parry with Kim winning 15–14.

"I just made the wrong decision. He came up with a great move and the luckier athlete won, but I am also satisfied with my silver. An Olympic medal is the biggest thing," said Bissdorf.

Kim won Korea's first gold medal in the nation's 50-year fencing history. "I did not think I was going to lose. I was not thinking about losing. I just used the skills I am good at. I am not good at defence, I am better at attack, so I attacked and that is why I won," said Kim.

The Competition

The men's individual foil was the start of a host of upsets in the Sydney 2000 Games, in a fencing competition described by the International Fencing Federation as the greatest ever.

The field of 122 men in the individual and team foil, épée and sabre events and 78 women in the foil and épée events included seven male and four female Olympic champions. Two of them, the Russian Federation's Stanislav Pozdnyakov, men's sabre, and Italy's Giovanna Trilini, women's foil, had already won three gold medals each at previous Olympic Games. Yet neither came away with an individual gold from the Sydney Games, although both added to their tally with victories in the teams event.

Fencing is one of only four sports that have been contested at every Olympic Games, with the men's competition included on the program of the first Games in 1896. Women's events were first included in the Olympic fencing competition in 1924, when a women's foil event was added to the program. Judging by the excitement of the competition and the crowd reaction in Sydney, fencing will continue on the Olympic program for at least another 104 years.

Each bout was held on a 14 m by 1.4 m piste, each fencer connected by wires and specialised clothing to an electronic scoring system that signalled when a hit occurred. While crowds were average for the preliminary bouts, during the semifinals and finals of the competition the stands were packed with an enthusiastic crowd of knowledgeable fencing fans as well as spectators new to the sport. Both groups were excited by the competition and cheered eagerly for their favourites. Eleven countries won medals, six of these taking gold, indicating a fairly even competition between the top fencing nations. Germany was the only major fencing power not to win an event, though their fencers picked up two silver and three bronze medals.

The rules for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games individual fencing events stipulated that the competition was to be decided by direct elimination, with athletes placed in a tableau of 64, with byes allocated as necessary. Each bout consisted of three rounds of three minutes each, with one minute between rounds, or until the first athlete made 15 touches. If the third round was completed before a fencer reached 15 hits, the competitor with the most hits won the match.

Fencing

*Volume Two
Chapter Five*

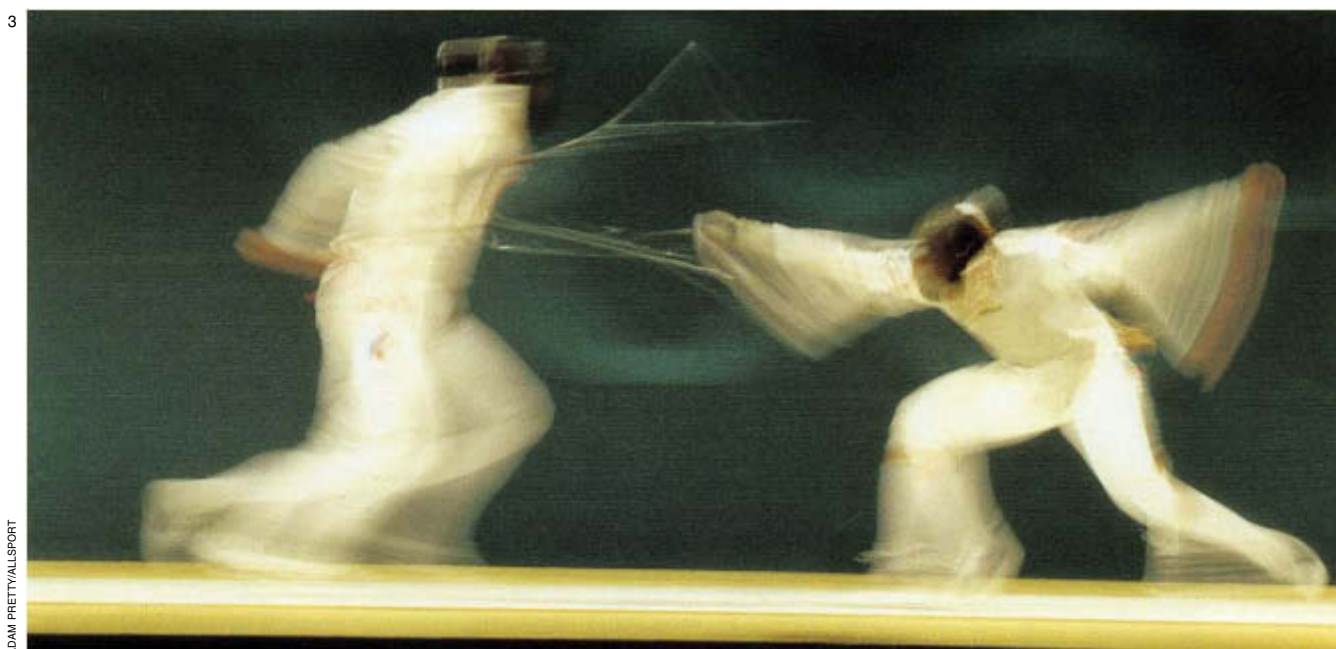


1. Ryszard Sobczak of Poland (left) and Daniele Crosta of Italy claim the same point during the men's team foil event
2. Korea's Kim Young-Ho wins the gold in the men's individual foil from Germany's Ralf Bissdorf
3. The men's foil fencing competition was dominated by the Russian Federation and Italy who won nine medals between them



2

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Fencing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



4. *Timea Nagy of Hungary is celebrated by her team after winning the gold in the women's individual épée*

5. *Korea's Lee Sang-Ki is congratulated following his 15-14 victory over Marcel Fischer of Switzerland in the bronze medal match in the men's individual épée*

6. *Pavel Kolobkov of the Russian Federation on his way to winning the gold in the men's individual épée against Hugues Obry of France. Kolobkov grabbed the lead in the second period and never relinquished it, becoming the only top seed to survive the quarterfinals*

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JACQUES DEMARTON/AFP

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STU FORSTER/ALLSPORT

If scores were equal at the end of time then a further one minute of fencing time was added, with the first athlete to score a touch declared the winner.

The team competition consisted of national teams of three fencers and was decided by a direct elimination formula. Each match consisted of nine bouts, with a maximum of four minutes each. Each bout continued until the first fencer made the next multiple of five touches or the time for the bout had expired. The winner was the first team to reach 45 touches. If the ninth bout was completed before either team reached 45 touches, the team with the most touches was declared the winner.

Men's Individual Épée

Pavel Kolobkov, ranked second in the world, won the Russian Federation's first fencing gold at these Games when he defeated veteran Frenchman Hugues Obry 15–12, in what experts agreed was a marvellous display of classical épée style fencing. It was a match characterised by a high number of double hits – ten in fact. Lee Sang-Ki of Korea won his country's first Olympic fencing medal by defeating Marcel Fischer of Switzerland for the bronze medal. Fischer had earlier lost his semifinal against Obry 13–15, during which the referee penalised him twice with red cards for barging into his opponent. Obry had moved to a 11–7 lead in this bout before Fischer levelled at 12–12. In the quarterfinal Fischer had defeated world and former Olympic champion Arnd Schmitt of Germany in the first major upset of a tournament that was to be characterised by favourites losing their matches, often in the early rounds.

Women's Individual Épée

In another event marked by an unexpected outcome, Hungary's Timea Nagy, ranked 13th for this competition, won the women's



ADAM PRETTYALLSPORT

individual épée 15–11 against 17th ranked Swiss fencer Gianna Habluetzel-Buerki. After being behind 1–3, Nagy first took the lead at 8–7 and remained in front for the rest of the bout. On her way to gold she had defeated Atlanta double gold medallist Laura Flessel-Colovic, French superstar and part-time model, in a closely fought semifinal, by 15–14. Flessel-Colovic won the bronze by a score of 15–6 from the Russian Federation's Tatiana Logounova.

Men's Team Épée

Eleven teams qualified for this event, with five receiving a first-round bye. Two of these, France and Italy, progressed to the final. Two yellow warning cards were issued in this drama-filled clash that displayed flair and brilliant fencing skills. Italy, fielding a slightly different team from the earlier rounds, won 39–38 in a come-from-behind victory, as the French team was ahead for all but the last four minutes. After the scores were tied at the end of the regular time, Alfredo Rota scored first touché in the sudden-death contest in extra time.

The Cuban team won the bronze, defeating Korea 45–31. The Cubans were always in control of this match, leading from the start. Host nation Australia achieved an unprecedented eighth place when they defeated China 45–38 in the fourth round. They were defeated by the eventual winners, Italy, 45–34 in their quarterfinal match.

Women's Team Épée

France and Hungary were the favourites going into this event, but neither team managed to win a medal. Instead, the Russian Federation won its second épée gold of the fencing competition, with its team of Tatiana Logounova, Maria Mazina and Karina Aznavourian. In the final, contested by the Russian Federation and Swiss teams, the Swiss allowed the Russians an early seven-point break before 15-year-old Sophie Lamon, the youngest fencer in the competition, narrowed the gap by five points.

With two rounds remaining the score was 24–22 in favour of the Russian Federation. But Maria Mazina, a bronze medallist from Atlanta, put the Russians ahead by eight points before the final bout and in the end they scored a decisive 45–35 victory. China, which had eliminated the French team 45–42 in the quarterfinals, then beat the top seeds, Hungary, 41–39, to claim the bronze medal.

Men's Individual Foil

A field of 40 contested this event, won by Korea's Kim Young-Ho in defeating Germany's Ralf Bissdorf. Dimitri Chevtchenko of the Russian Federation defeated Jean-Noel Ferrari of France for the bronze medal.

Women's Individual Foil

The brilliant Italian fencer Valentina Vezzali won the first of her two gold medals of this tournament when she decisively defeated Rita Koenig of Germany in the gold medal match of the women's individual foil competition by a score of 15–5. Italy picked up another medal in this event when Giovanna Trillini won the bronze medal match, beating Laura Gabriela Carlescu Badea of Romania 15–9.

Men's Team Foil

In the quarterfinals the Chinese team upset the Russian Federation, the defending Olympic champions, 45–30. The Chinese then produced their second major upset in this event, eliminating Italy 45–32 in the semifinals, thus setting up a gold medal clash with France, which had beaten Poland 45–38 in the other semifinal. Earlier the Poles had defeated the top-ranked German team 45–37. Later, in the play-off for fifth position against Ukraine, the Germans again lost, this time by a score of 45–43. Sergiy Golubytsky, the foil world champion for three consecutive years, in a remarkable display of fencing scored 27 of the Ukrainian team's points.

The gold medal went to the French team, which consisted of Jean-Noel Ferrari, Brice Guyart and Patrice Lhotellier and the substitute Lionel Plumenail. They defeated their Chinese opponents, Dong Zhaozhi, Wang Haibin and Ye Chong, in a close match, 45–44. The two teams were neck to neck throughout. In the final round, Wang accidentally ran off the piste and fell to the ground. He was later given a red card for talking back to the referee. This card awarded the French a touché and, as it turned out, the winning margin. French head coach, Patrice Menon, commenting on his team's win said, "It was the match of their life. They have totally mastered their art and they were so well prepared." Italy defeated Poland by 45–38 in the play-off for the bronze.

Women's Team Foil

In semifinal matches Poland beat Germany 45–34 and Italy defeated the USA 45–38. The Italian team of Valentina Vezzali, Giovanna Trillina and Diana Bianchedi easily won the final, defeating the Polish team of Magdalena Mroczkiewicz, Barbara Wolnicka and Sylwia Gruchala by 45–36. Wolnicka replaced Anna Rybicka who had fenced in the earlier rounds. The victory gave Italy its third gold of the fencing competition, two of these coming in the women's foil events, with victories in both the team and individual competitions. In the match for the bronze medal Germany beat the USA 45–42. The second-seeded Germans were ahead by two points, 44–42, when US fencer Ann Marsh was issued a red card for a 'covering target' infringement, giving her opponent Rita Koenig, silver medallist in the women's individual foil event, the winning point.

Men's Individual Sabre

In another event marked by upsets and surprises, Mihai Claudiu Covaliu of Romania won the men's individual sabre from Mathieu Gourdain of France by 15–12, after three of the world's top-ranked sabre fencers failed to reach the semifinals. Covaliu, who led by 14–10, lost the next two



PHIL GARRICK/FAIRFAX

points before scoring the winning point. Wiradech Kothny of Germany won the bronze from Domonkos Ferjancsik of Hungary, who was lucky not to be penalised for disagreeing with the referee's decisions.

Men's Team Sabre

The final event on the fencing program was won by the Russian Federation's team of Slanislav Pozdniakov, Serguei Charikov and Alexei Frossine, who completely dominated the final against their French opponents, Damien Touya, Julien Pillet and Mathieu Gourdain. The Russian Federation won seven of nine bouts, posting a score of 45–32. The match appeared to be all but over, with the Russian Federation team needing only one more hit to win, when the French 1999 world champion, Touya, sought medical attention for an injury. After ten minutes the match resumed, but not for long, as the Russian Federation's Pozdniakov scored after only three seconds. Germany won the bronze medal, defeating Romania by 45–27. Wiradech Kothny won all three of his bouts for the German team in this match and picked up his second bronze of the competition.



ROSS KINNAIRD/ALLSPORT

Fencing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT

7. The Russian Federation's Svetlana Boiko competes against Rita Koenig of Germany in the women's team foil event. Koenig defeated Boiko 38–35 and went on to win the bronze medal

8. The Italian team celebrate their victory in the team foil against Poland. With this victory, Italy secured the bronze medal

9. French reserve Cedric Seguin (left) is dejected as he loses the final bout to Stanislav Pozdniakov of the Russian Federation, leading to a Russian triumph in the men's team sabre





FOOTBALL

Brisbane Cricket Ground, Brisbane

Bruce Stadium, Canberra

Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide

Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne

Olympic Stadium, Sydney Olympic Park

Sydney Football Stadium, Centennial Parklands

13–30 September 2000

Winning from behind and form-shattering results seemed to be the norm in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games football competition. Football is the most popular team sport played in the world. With the relaxation of the amateur regulation and the inclusion of the women's competition in the Olympic Games, the 'world game' has also become one of the most popular and thrilling Olympic sports.

Although 2000 marked a hundred years of Olympic football, the first Games to include women's football were those in Atlanta, where also the first Olympic gold medal in the sport went to an African nation. The Sydney 2000 Games continued the challenge to the traditional order, when underdogs Cameroon and Norway, respectively, beat their more fancied rivals, Spain and the USA, in the men's and women's finals.

The football tournament of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was the only sport played outside the host city. It was innovative and itinerant, with pool and semifinal games being played in four other capital cities around the nation. Crowds of over 90 000 and 70 000 for matches in Melbourne justified this decentralisation. Football, which had one million spectators at 48 matches, outdrew all other sports. The home crowd may have been disappointed by the performances of the Australian team, but the high scoring (an average of almost four goals per game) and nail-biting finishes kept them roaring for more.

Men's Competition

The first round of pool games began before the Opening Ceremony. Australia played Italy at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) in front of a tremendous crowd of 93 252. This was a game from heaven for organisers, as Melbourne has a large Italian population. Australia held out 0–0 until Italy scored a goal in the 81st minute, Andrea Pirlo gratefully accepting a misdirected back-pass from Australian Hayden Foxe – the harbinger of a disappointing tournament for the Olyroos.

The 1996 Olympic champions, Nigeria, began with an indifferent draw against Honduras, while in group C the USA held the favoured Czech Republic to a 2–2 draw. Cameroon's 3–2 victory against Kuwait in Brisbane was not convincing. The next day, also in Brisbane, perennial favourites Brazil gave Slovakia a head start before winning 3–1. Chile was impressive in its 4–1 victory over Morocco, with Inter Milan

star Ivan Zamorano scoring a hat-trick. At 33 and in the twilight of his career, he went on to become the tournament's top scorer with six goals.

In other games, Spain easily overcame Korea, while South Africa was on the end of a second-half double from Japan's Naohiro Takahara, losing 2–1. The amazing result and major upset of the group rounds and possibly the tournament was South Africa's 3–1 defeat of Brazil.

In an Australian double-header at the Sydney Football Stadium (SFS) on 16 September, the prospect of seeing the Olyroos play the Olympic champions, Nigeria, drew a crowd of 38 080. The result, however, was not what the crowd wished, the local men losing 3–2, after gallantly levelling from a two-goal deficit before Victor Agali sealed it for the Nigerians.

The quarterfinalists began to emerge before the final pool games. Italy and Nigeria came through Group A. The US men's side caused an upset when it finished the pool games with 5 points and went into the quarterfinals for the first time. Cameroon survived by grabbing a draw against the Czech Republic. The Australian men, already out of the running, lost their third match 1–2 to Honduras. Nor was the football pride of the host nation to be restored by the women's team, which also finished last in its group.

Day 8 of the Games brought the men's quarterfinals. These were played in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide. The standout game, Spain versus Italy in Sydney, was fated to be a typical European 'arm-wrestle'. The draw meant that only a single European team would go through to the semifinals.

The setting, the crowd of 38 134, and the occasion all argued for a classic match. Italy played in an all-white uniform, not the familiar 'azzurri' stripe, Spain in red and gold. The Italians had tremendous support from the locals and the early encounters were fierce, but it was Spain that had more positive moments. They began to dominate the mid-field through the Barcelona player Xavi (Xavier Hernandez). Tamudo (Raul Tamudo) could



DARREN ENGLAND/ALLSPORT

Football

Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Siri Mullinix, US goalkeeper and Joy Fawcett of the USA collide with a Norwegian player in mid-air during the women's final
 2. The US men's team celebrate their hard-fought victory over Japan in the quarterfinal, which ended in a 5-4 penalty Shootout
 3. A view of Brisbane's Gabba Stadium before a preliminary match between Cameroon and Kuwait.
- The Sydney 2000 football competition was held in five different states to spread the Games across Australia and so allow greater national participation



KIMIMASA MAYAMA/REUTERS

Football
Volume Two
Chapter Five



4. Spain's Xavi (right) and Chad McCarty from the USA are head to head in the men's semifinal
5. Serge Mimpo of Cameroon celebrates his country's first-ever Olympic medal. Cameroon won the final against Spain in a nailbiting penalty shootout after they had fallen behind 0-2 at half time
6. Chile's team and excited fans celebrate victory in the men's bronze medal match against the USA



SIMON BAKER/REUTERS

have put the Spanish ahead in the 62nd minute, but missed a chance from 8 m. He was replaced in the 70th minute and, as by script, it was the substitute, Gabri (Gabriel Garcia), who took an excellent through ball from Xavi to score the winning goal in the 86th minute.

While the Europeans jostled in Sydney, the Chileans were crashing their way to a 3-0 lead in Melbourne. The under-strength Nigerians had no answer to the organisation and flair of Chile's Ivan Zamorano, who commanded his young legion brilliantly. Chile eventually won 4-1 and was favourite for the gold at this stage. Their prominent and vocal supporters were demonstratively delighted by the result.

The other African side, Cameroon, did not surrender in their quarterfinal clash with Brazil. They never stopped running, shooting and, particularly, hoping. They ended the match with nine men and at one stage had only eight on the field. They led 1-0 going into the last minute, when a second yellow card for Aaron Nguimbat caused his expulsion. From the free kick awarded on the edge of the box, Ronaldinho (Ronaldo de Assis Moreira) scored the equaliser for Brazil and the game went into extra time. Defying logic, however, the 'indomitable



MICHAEL STEELE/ALLSPORT

lions' of Cameroon scored the golden goal in the 113th minute of play when Modeste Mbami hit a fantastic right foot shot from 20 m that left the Brazilian keeper, Helton (Helton da Silva Arruda), in despair.

Simultaneously, the fourth quarterfinal between the USA and Japan was exciting the Adelaide crowd. Japan had the match won until conceding a penalty late in the second half, from which Pete Vagenas scored. No goals came in extra time and the agony of a penalty shoot-out resulted. Amazingly it was Hidetoshi Nakata, Japan's most experienced player, who missed the penalty that put the USA through to the semifinals.

In the Melbourne semifinal, in front of an excellent crowd of 64 338 and in pouring rain, Cameroon continued to confound the pundits by beating Chile. The game was locked up at 0-0 late in the second half, but in the 78th minute a blocked shot from Chilean substitute Sebastian Gonzalez ricocheted off Cameroon defender Patrice Abanda to give Chile the lead. It seemed that it was only in adversity that Cameroon produced its best, as Patrick Mboma equalised six minutes later from a corner, and then, as extra time looked likely, Cameroon was awarded a penalty. Lauren Etame Mayer confidently slotted it past Nelson Tapia and Cameroon progressed to a place in the final to be played at Sydney Olympic Stadium. Their opponents were decided at the SFS, where 39 800 spectators saw Spain dispatch the USA 3-1. There was nothing glamorous about the win but the Spaniards ground the Americans down in a highly professional display.

Could the men's final live up to the drama of the semifinal or the women's final? This was the question all asked. As we now know, it did and, in the process, took Olympic football to new heights. The match was unbelievably dramatic. There was a missed penalty, four goals and two send-offs before the Russian roulette of the penalty shoot-out.

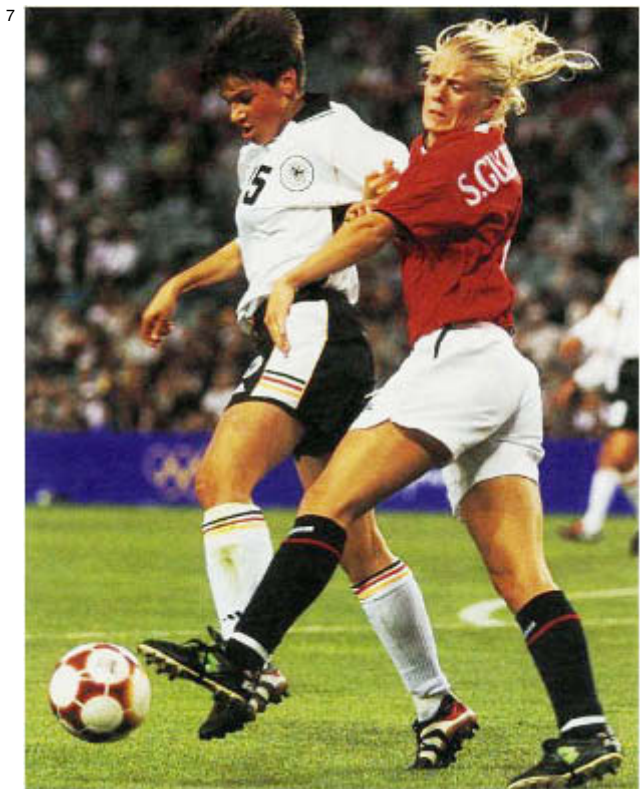
The Cameroon team added new dimensions to its usual heroics. They conceded a goal to Spain's Xavi after 75 seconds and another to Gabri for a 2-0 deficit at half-time. The young team, however, regrouped after the break. After periods of extreme pressure from Cameroon, the Spanish defender, Ivan Amaya, scored an own goal, then Cameroon's Samuel Eto'o Fils scored the equaliser to force the game to extra time.

The Spanish player Gabri went from hero to villain when he was sent off in the second half. Then team-mate Jose Mari (Jose Maria Romero) was also dismissed, in the 91st minute. Despite facing only nine men, Cameroon could not score a 'golden' goal during extra time, but they prevailed in the penalty shoot-out against a team possessing some of the world's ace goalscorers. Most of the capacity crowd vocally supported the Cameroon side that had breathed a sense of excitement into the football competition at Sydney 2000; it seemed as if the gods supported the team too! The twice-cursed Amaya missed for Spain and when Pierre Wome left-footed the ball to the Spanish keeper Daniel Aranzubia's right, scoring the 'winning' penalty for Cameroon, the Olympic Stadium erupted in a collective roar.

Idriss Carlos Kameni, the 16-year-old Cameroon goalkeeper, found instant fame. He had become the youngest ever footballer to win Olympic gold.



CLIVE BURNSKILL/ALLSPORT



SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT

Women's Competition

The highlight of the women's first round was the Group F game between the defending champions USA and the never-say-die team from Norway. The ease of the USA's 2–0 victory gave no hint of the dramatic rematch in the final. China, the women's soccer giant of Asia, had little trouble beating Nigeria 3–1 in a chilly Canberra.

The host nation's team, the Matildas, played their second-round game against Sweden at the SFS. Australia took the lead in the 57th minute with a skillfully headed goal from defender Cheryl Salisbury, but Sweden equalised with a penalty from captain Malin Andersson. It was a tough game and the Australians were lucky to draw, Sweden having 14 corners to Australia's one and 18 shots at goal to Australia's five.

Sunday 24 September, Day 9, saw the women's semifinal teams decided. The semifinalists for the women's competition were never really in doubt. Group E was dominated by Germany. Their direct, physical style compared dramatically with the more flamboyant play of the Brazilians. Group F was a little more exciting, though Nigeria did not perform to expectations. The USA was held to a draw by China but easily accounted for the other two sides. Norway came second and confirmed their status as Europe's best.

The women's semifinals were both dour games, illustrating that sudden-death football is often not 'pretty'. Brazil, attempting to match the élan of their male counterparts, led by their captain, the legendary Sissi (Sisleide Lima do Amor), faced the Olympic and world champions, the USA. The USA, despite winning only 1–0, was always in control and the Brazilians could not breach their organised defence. The goal came in a goalmouth scramble, when Mia Hamm turned in a Brandi Chastain free kick. The second semifinal, played at the SFS, was an all-European clash between Germany and Norway.

Both teams defended with obdurate persistence and produced fast-breaking attacks, all of which came to nothing. Finally the Germans fell on their swords in scoring an own goal and Norway went to the final.

The women's football competition came to a conclusion on Day 13, with the SFS hosting the women's bronze medal game and then the final. In the bronze play-off Germany faced Brazil, whom they had beaten easily in the preliminary rounds. Once again they were far too powerful and after a scoreless first half, goals by Renate Lingor and Birgit Prinz proved enough.

The women's final embodied everything that is marvellous about elite team sport. There was skill aplenty, excitement, pathos, courage and, of course, plenty of luck. In the women's final both groups of supporters added to the colour and passion. Unfortunately for the USA, the Norwegian women had not read the script and did not defer to the champions.

The game appeared to be going as the pundits believed it would as the USA controlled the game from the kick-off. They were ahead in the fifth minute, after Hamm gave Tiffeny Milbrett a chance that she took. Norway survived several close calls and only began to challenge when they reverted to a more direct aerial route to goal. Just before half-time, they were rewarded for their persistence when Gro Espeseth scored the equaliser. The roles were reversed in the second half, as Norway took the lead in the 78th minute, again via a header, this time from Ragnhild Gulbrandsen. Champion side that they are, the USA fought back and, after exerting immense pressure, they scored in the second minute of injury time, with a header from Milbrett.

The Norwegians dominated the first seven minutes of extra time, playing long balls forward for Solveig Gulbrandsen to head on, and this seemed to unsettle the USA. In the eleventh minute of extra time a long ball went to Dagny Mellgren, who controlled it, evaded two defenders and scored the 'golden' goal of her life. The battlers from Norway had beaten the Atlanta and world champions 3–2 to take their Olympic mantle. The game was played at tremendous pace and in wonderful spirit. It was tough, uncompromising, and a truly Olympic contest.



JOSE MIGUEL GOMEZ/REUTERS

Football
Volume Two
Chapter Five



7. Ariane Hingst (left) of Germany and Solveig Gulbrandsen of Norway battle for the ball during the women's semifinal
8. A sad moment for the German women's team: undefeated throughout the tournament, Tina Wunderlich scored an own goal in the semifinal which her team could not equalise, costing the team a place in the final
9. Norway's Brit Sandaune is greeted by fans after a dramatic 3-2 victory in extra time over defending Olympic champion USA in the gold medal match



SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT





GYMNASTICS: ARTISTIC

Sydney SuperDome, Sydney Olympic Park
16–25 September 2000

With the rare combination of brilliant athleticism and charisma, Svetlana Khorkina from the Russian Federation stands out from her rivals in the world of gymnastics. At 164 cm, a head taller than most other competitors, she came to the Sydney Games as the favourite with superbly practised routines. But when it came time to perform she faltered in the all-around final. Showing the qualities of a true champion, Svetlana refocused after this disappointment, winning gold and defending her Olympic title in the individual competition on the uneven bars.

Fourteen medals were awarded in artistic gymnastics. While Khorkina did not quite live up to expectations, countryman Alexei Nemov was dominant in the men's competition. He helped the Russian Federation win the bronze medal in the team event and also won the individual all-around gold medal. He followed that with silver on the floor, bronze on both the pommel horse and the parallel bars and finally gold on the horizontal bar.

The Romanian gymnasts won gold in the women's team final and dominated the all-around final, winning gold, silver and bronze. But in an unfortunate blaze of controversy, the gold medal was taken away from 16-year-old Andreea Raducan of Romania after she tested positive to a banned substance.

Artistic gymnastics was as graceful and beautiful as ever, but it also had its fair share of drama in Sydney.

Men's Team Competition

As multiple world champions without an Olympic gold medal, there was pressure on the Chinese gymnasts to perform well in Sydney. With a display of consistency, power and precision the Chinese men were awarded gold in the team final. Team members included Yang Wei, Zheng Lihui, Xing Aowei, Huang Xu, Xiao Junfeng and the brilliant Li Xiaopeng, who was awarded 9.712 on the vault to complete his team's performance. The final score of 231.919 was almost two points higher than their score in the qualification round.

Ukraine won silver, due particularly to the performances of Oleksandr Beresh and Oleksandr Svitlychnyy. The Russian Federation's relegation to third place was the surprise of the competition. It was only through the strong performance of their star, Alexei Nemov, that they were able to beat Japan for third. Nemov received a 9.775 on the parallel bars, his final apparatus, to save his country. The top individual performers in the team event were China's Yang Wei and the Russian Federation's Alexei Nemov.

Women's Team Competition

In the women's team competition the renowned gymnastic nations made it through to the finals. Host nation Australia looked a certainty for a finals berth until a brilliant performance by Spain's Esther Moya on the vault qualified her team just ahead of Australia's.

Romania won the women's team competition with a total score of 154.608. Gold medallists Andreea Raducan, Maria Olaru, Simona Amanar, Loredana Boboc, Andreea Isarescu and Claudia Presacan were the members of Romania's first victorious women's team since the 1984 Los Angeles Games.

With second and third places undecided going into the final free exercise, the pressure fell on the shoulders of the Russian Federation's Svetlana Khorkina, who had earlier fallen on the uneven bars. Considered by most to be the reigning queen of world gymnastics, Khorkina lived up to expectations and performed brilliantly, scoring 9.787 and securing the silver medal for the Russian Federation, 154.403 total points. China won the bronze, total score 154.008, with the USA fourth, Spain fifth and Ukraine sixth.

Men's All-Around Final

The men's all-around final began on the fifth day of competition with 36 athletes from 16 countries competing.



3

ANDY LYONS/ALLSPORT

Gymnastics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



2

TRENT PARKE/FAIRFAX

1. Yang Wei of China greets the judges after completing his routine. He won silver in the men's all-around and gold in the team competition
2. Li Xiaopeng and head coach Yubing Huang (right) are jubilant over their gold medal in the men's team competition – China's first Olympic gold in this event
3. Alexei Nemov of the Russian Federation performs on the parallel bars during the men's all-around final. Nemov matched his medal haul in Atlanta, winning another six medals in Sydney

Gymnastics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



It was fitting that the so-called 'man of steel', the 1996 Atlanta silver medallist, Alexei Nemov of the Russian Federation, prevailed. The 24-year-old was the top individual scorer in the qualifying round and the team final. He led from the final rotation, scoring 9.787 on the horizontal bar. However, he had a nervous wait for China's Yang Wei to finish his round on the pommel horse. Yang was awarded a score of 9.750, when he needed 9.863 for gold. Nemov won the all-around champion title by the narrow margin of 0.113. Third was Oleksandr Beresh of the Ukraine.

Women's All-Around Final

Nadia Comaneci at Montreal in 1976 was the last Romanian to win the women's all-around final. However, in a night of competition when many of the world's gymnastics stars faltered, the consistency of the Romanians won through. In a rare trifecta 16-year-old Andreea Raducan won the gold with a score of 38.893, while the silver and bronze medals went to her compatriots Simona Amanar, 38.642 and Maria Olaru, 38.581.

4. Romanian gymnast Andreea Raducan between her coaches during the women's all-around final
5. Raducan is shouldered by her coach Octavian Belu after her victorious performance in the all-around final. The celebration was short-lived, however, as Raducan tested positive to a banned stimulant and was stripped of her medal
6. Svetlana Khorkina of the Russian Federation prepares before starting her routine on the uneven bars. After her disappointment in the all-around event she defended her Olympic title on the uneven bars



JAMIE SQUIRE/SPORT

The 148 cm Raducan had entered the final rotation behind the Ukrainian Viktoriya Karpenko. But in the free exercise routine, Karpenko uncharacteristically stepped out of bounds twice and only managed a score of 8.725. The highly fancied Khorkina's medal chances slipped when she fell on the vault and the uneven bars. Another medal contender, China's Yang Yun, fell from the beam. The Romanians kept their composure and managed to avoid such misfortunes.

In one of the most sensational incidents of the Games, Andreea Raducan was stripped of her gold medal after testing positive to pseudoephedrine, a banned stimulant. It was the first gymnastics drug scandal in Olympic history. Raducan reportedly had a slight cold and was given the drug by a team doctor, who was subsequently banned from the next Olympic Summer and Winter Games. Simona Amanar automatically became the gold medallist in the competition, Maria Olaru got silver, and China's Xuan Liu was elevated to bronze.

Near the end of the all-around competition it emerged that the vaulting apparatus, incredibly, was set at the wrong height, 5 cm too low at 1.20 m. The gymnasts were offered the opportunity to repeat their vaults, which five did, but the results of the repeated vaults did not affect the medal placings.

Apparatus Finals

The apparatus finals were scheduled for the ninth and tenth days of competition. The top eight men and women in the earlier qualification competition on each apparatus were eligible for the final. The winner of the all-around men's competition, the Russian Federation's Alexei Nemov, competed in five of the six events. In the women's apparatus finals Svetlana Khorkina had qualified in three of the four events and thus had an opportunity to shed the disappointments of the all-around event, although she decided not to take part in the vault.

Men's Floor Exercise

In the men's floor exercise final a stunning performance by Latvia's 22-year-old Igors Vihrovs, with a score of 9.812, surprisingly edged out the Russian Federation favourite, Alexei Nemov. The bronze went to Bulgaria's Jordan Iovtchev. Vihrovs said after his performance, "I never dream about this, it is super. I could not believe I could do this. I am very proud."

Women's Vault

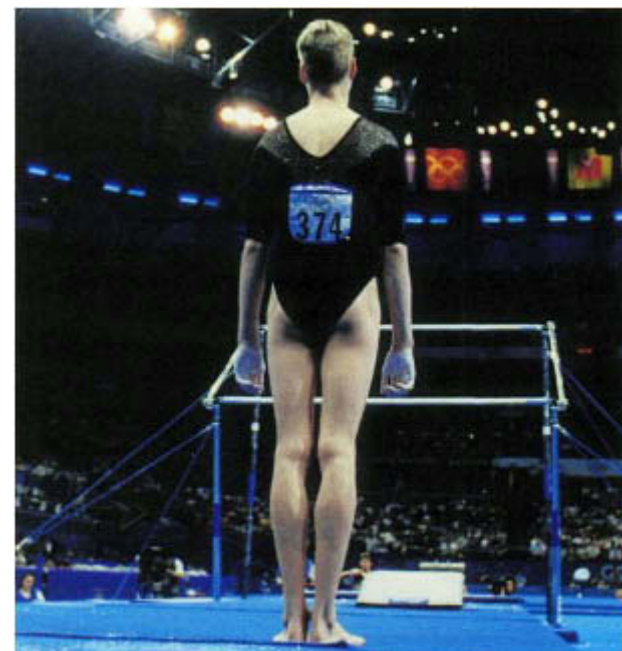
With the height of the apparatus now correct, Khorkina's replacement, the diminutive Elena Zamolodtchikova of the Russian Federation, vaulted magnificently. She was informed of her place in the final only 15 minutes before the start and won from Romania's Andreea Raducan, with the Russian Federation also gaining the bronze through Ekaterina Lobazniouk. Raducan kept her vault silver medal despite losing the all-around gold medal because of taking the banned drug.

Men's Pommel Horse

The pommel horse is considered by many to be the most difficult apparatus in the men's program. The event was narrowly won by Romania's Marius Urzica, 9.862 over France's Eric Poujade, 9.825. The capacity crowd expressed its displeasure at the judges' awarding Alexei Nemov only



MIKE BLAKE/REUTERS



JED JACOBSON/SPORT

9.800, which won him the bronze. Ever the sportsman, Nemov said later, "I felt like [the] judges gave me a small score but I believe the judges are fair and the medals were given to the right people."

Women's Uneven Bars

Although Khorkina was the favourite for this event, her form was under question. Despite the pressure she rose to the occasion, scoring 9.862. The last gymnast to perform was Ling Jie of China, scoring 9.837, a mere .025 behind Khorkina. China's Yang Yun, scoring 9.787 was awarded the bronze. Khorkina said afterwards, "If I did not get over my disappointment, I would not be Khorkina and I would not be standing here with a gold medal."

Men's Rings

The fifth and final event for the evening was the men's rings, and Hungary's Szilveszter Csollany stunned the audience with a superb display of strength, scoring 9.850. Second was perhaps the sentimental favourite, Greece's Dimosthenis Tampakos, scoring 9.762, and the bronze was awarded to Bulgaria's Iordan Iovtchev, 9.737.

Men's Vault

In what was a final riddled with errors it was consistency that won the day and the gold medal, unexpectedly, went to Spain's Gervasio Deferr, with a score of 9.712, followed by the Russian Federation's Alexey Bondarenko, scoring 9.587 and Poland's Leszek Blanik, 9.475.

Women's Beam

The last performer, China's Liu Xuan, recorded a graceful and thrilling 9.825 performance to brush aside the two Russian Federation women, Ekaterina Lobazniouk, 9.787 and Elena

Prodounova, 9.775, in a very high-standard final. Liu announced, "This could be my last competition and this will be a perfect way to finish my career."

Men's Parallel Bars

The performance by China's Li Xiaopeng, with a score of 9.825, earned him the gold medal, while the silver went to Korea's Lee Joo-Hyung, scoring 9.812. The crowd again displayed their displeasure at the low score awarded to Alexei Nemov 9.800, who placed third.

Women's Floor Exercise

With a classic ballet-like performance scoring a 9.812 it appeared that Khorkina's disappointments had ended. However, a stunning routine by compatriot Elena Zamolodtchikova was awarded 9.850, the highest score of any gymnast, male or female, in the day's program. Khorkina had to settle for a silver, and Romania's Simona Amanar the bronze.

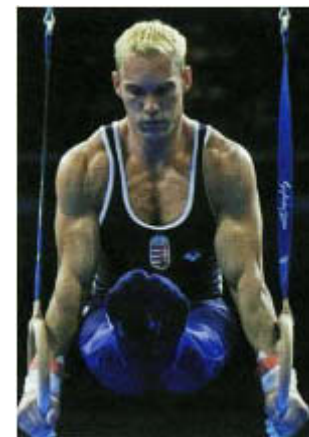
Men's Horizontal Bar

The men's horizontal bar was the final apparatus and two athletes, Alexei Nemov and France's Benjamin Varonian, were tied at 9.787. Nemov was awarded the gold after a tie-breaker was applied, with Korea's Lee Joo-Hyung winning bronze.

Gala Day

The Sydney 2000 artistic gymnastics program ended with the second Gala Day, following the precedent established at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. There were no medals to be won at this exhibition but the gymnasts had the opportunity, to display their talents, free from the pressure of competition. The obvious enthusiasm with which the athletes approached this occasion was appreciated by the crowd who enjoyed the 100 minute show.

Gymnastics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



7

AMY SANCETTA/PHOTO

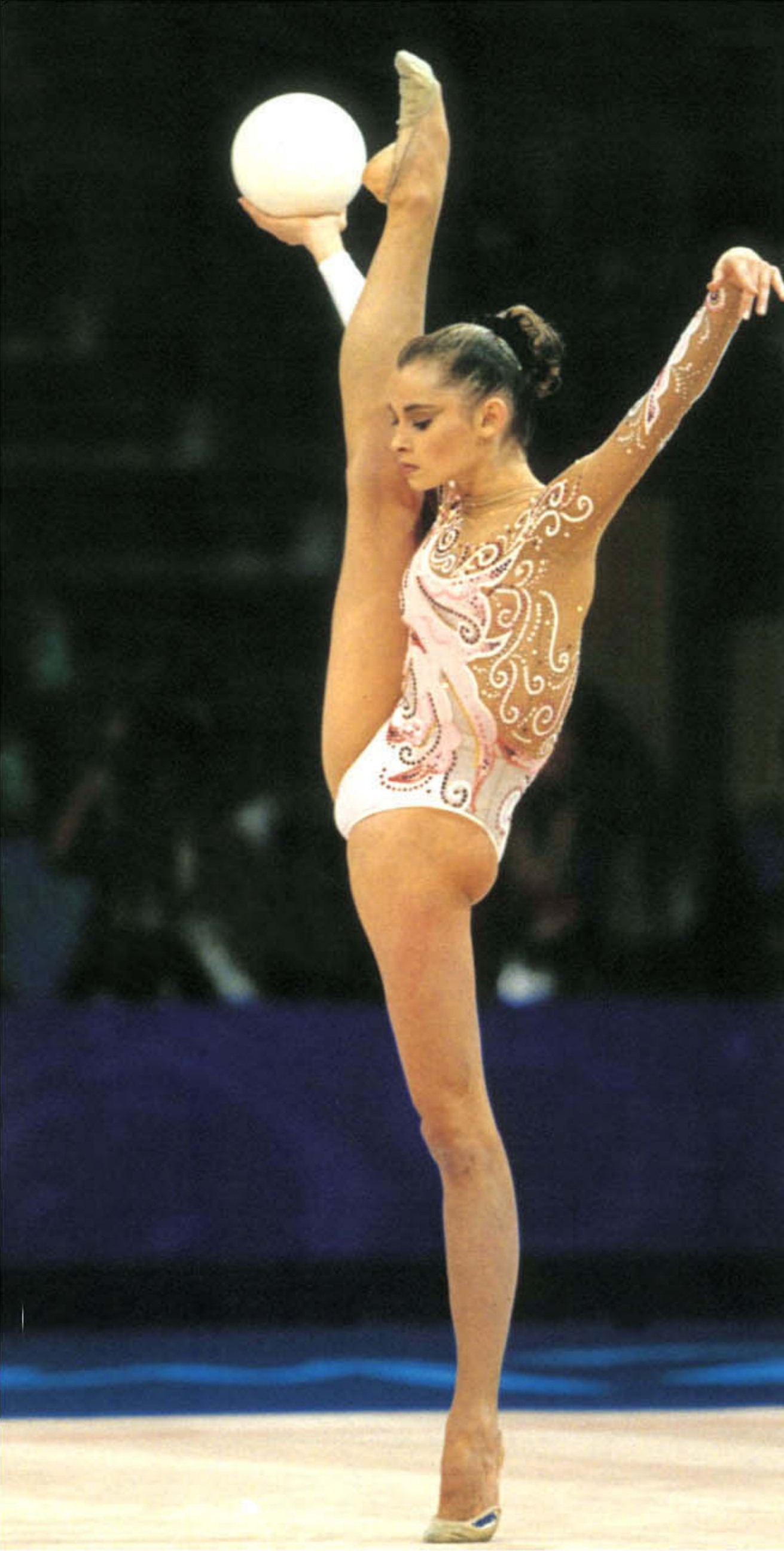


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EZRA SHAW/SPORT

7. Szilveszter Csollany of Hungary demonstrates his strength on the rings, a performance that won him the gold medal

8. Liu Xuan leaps high on the beam during the final, winning gold for China



GYMNASTICS: RHYTHMIC

Pavilion 3, Sydney Olympic Park

28 September–1 October 2000

The Olympic Games is the one chance, every four years, for athletes in many sports to challenge themselves against the very best in the world. This brings out a competitive spirit that can create and build champions, or challenge their hopes and dreams. Rhythmic gymnastics combines body and apparatus in perfect harmony – but under the pressure of Olympic competition anything can happen, as favourite, the Russian Federation's Alina Kabaeva, discovered. After convincingly winning the qualifying competition, the graceful Kabaeva had the gold medal almost in her hands – just not yet around her neck. But the unthinkable happened in the all-important final. She lost control of her hoop, which rolled out of bounds, taking with it her gold medal hopes.

At the Sydney 2000 Games 84 women competed in rhythmic gymnastics: 24 in the individual event and 10 teams of six in the group event. Unlike artistic gymnastics, individual competitors do not also take part in the team competition. The rhythmic gymnastics individual competition was introduced at the 1984 Los Angeles Games and the team event was added at Atlanta in 1996.

Routines should cover the entire floor area and gymnasts must use both their right and left hands. They are required to complete the routine either holding or touching the apparatus. The individual competition is an all-around competition, using rope, hoop, ball and ribbon, in which 24 gymnasts take part.

Ten groups of six gymnasts each, five members per routine plus one interchange, take part in the group competition. Only five members of each group perform each exercise. There are two routines. The 10 clubs' features five gymnasts, each with a pair of clubs. The 'two hoops and three ribbons' is performed by the other five gymnasts, each holding one apparatus.

Individual All-Around Competition

The Russian Federation's 17-year-old Alina Kabaeva qualified first for the final with 39.691 out of a possible 40 points. She was considered unbeatable for the gold in the final. In the lead up to Sydney she had won her third consecutive European title in June and had scored a perfect 40.00 all-around total in seven competitions. The Russian Federation's coach, Irina Viner, described Kabaeva as her secret weapon, "I couldn't believe my eyes when I first saw Alina. The girl has the very rare combination of two qualities crucial to rhythmic gymnastics, flexibility and jumping."

Eighteen-year-old Yulia Raskina of Belarus scored second highest in the qualification with 39.624, and the Russian Federation's Yulia Barsukova was third at 39.600.

The *International Gymnast* magazine wrote of Kabaeva: "If ever rhythmic gymnastics is to have a breakout Olympic star, Alina Kabaeva could be it. Pretty and personable, with oodles of performance presence, she transcends her often obscure sport."

The crowd went into shock during the final as Kabaeva's hoop rolled out of bounds, incurring a .200 penalty. The gold was won by her compatriot, the 21-year-old Yulia Barsukova, who scored 39.632, an improvement of .032 on her qualifying mark. She said afterwards, "I could hardly believe it, I didn't expect to win an Olympic gold medal. I had hoped for a medal."

Yulia Raskina claimed the silver medal, 39.548 with Kabaeva winning the bronze, 39.466.

Group Competition

The team competition confirmed the places of the world powers, although the Atlanta gold medallists, Spain, were not successful in qualifying for the final.

In the final, each team of five women produced stunning routines of creative choreography, performed to exciting and well-chosen music. The standard was extremely high and, as in the qualifying round, the top three teams scored in excess of 39 out of a possible 40 points. The next five teams bettered 38.

The total presentation of the athletes was outstanding. The colours in the costumes and the equipment added to the quality and innovation of the performances.

The favourites, Greece, were beaten by brilliant performances from the Russian Federation and Belarus. The teams from these



10

Gymnastics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



GARY W. PRIOR/ALLSPORT

two countries each scored 39.5. The apparatus breakdown was also identical, with each team scoring 19.8 on clubs and 19.7 on hoops and ribbons. To produce a result, the normally discarded high and low scores of the judges were used to determine the gold and silver medals. The Russian Federation was declared the winner over Belarus by .02.

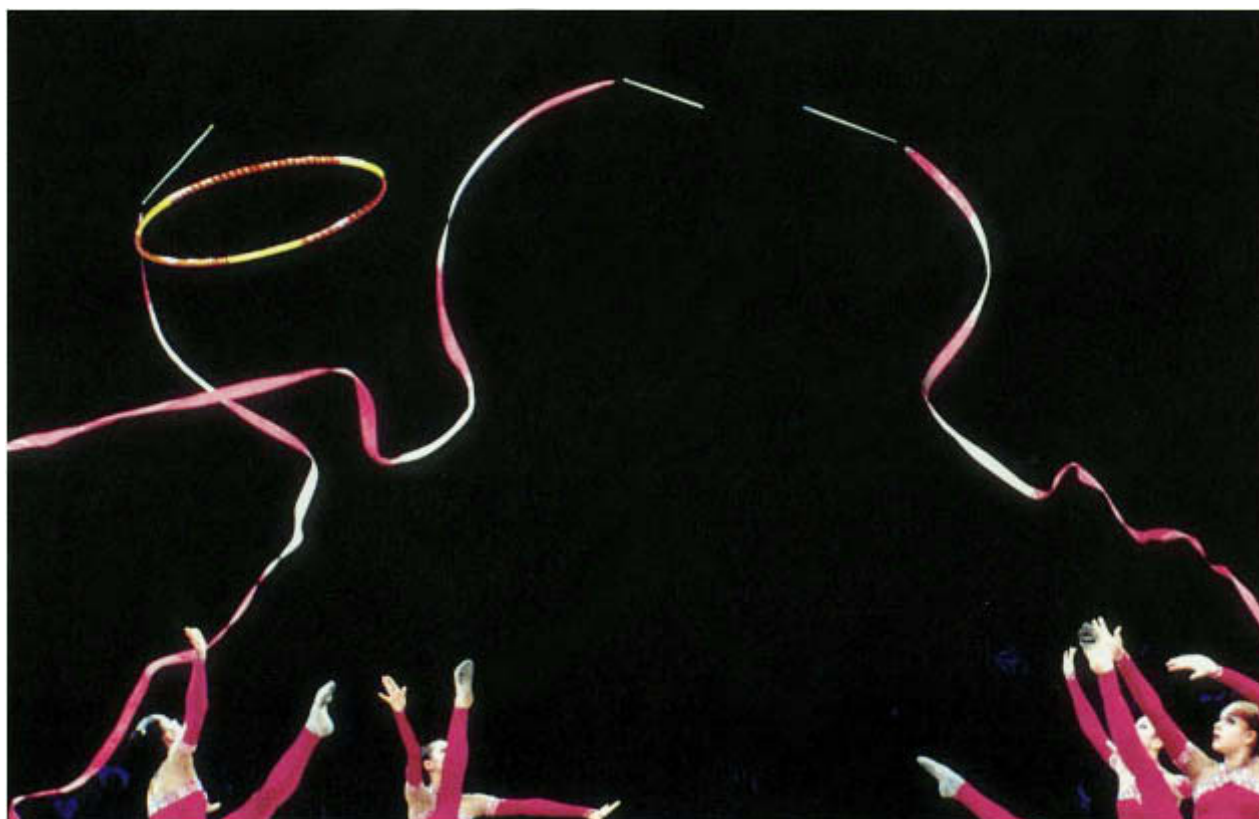
Their six-woman winning team from the Russian Federation, including one interchange, was Irina Belova, Elena Chalamova, Natalia Lavrova, Maria Netessova, Vera Shimanskaya and Irina Zilber. The Greek team consolidated its hold on the bronze medal position with a strong performance in the final routine.

The Brazilian team were a favourite of the rhythmic gymnastic audience. They displayed considerable innovation with their routine in front of an appreciative crowd. Later when the Brazilian score was announced, the enthusiastic members of the crowd made their displeasure known as they believed their favourite team had not been adequately rewarded by the judges. Japan, another emerging nation in the sport, performed creditably, though the degrees of difficulty of their routine seemed beyond their skill.



11

TRENT PARKE/FAIRFAX



12

TRENT PARKE/FAIRFAX

9. Opposite page: Gold medallist Yulia Barsukova of the Russian Federation delivers her elegant performance during the women's individual all-around competition in the rhythmic gymnastics final

10. Alina Kabaeva of the Russian Federation, world and European champion and overwhelming favourite for Sydney committed an error during her routine which cost her the gold medal in the individual all-around event

11. The Russian team celebrates their victory in the group competition

12. A perfectly rehearsed and executed performance earns the Russian team the top spot on the dais



GYMNASTICS: TRAMPOLINE
Sydney SuperDome, Sydney Olympic Park
22-23 September 2000

Alexandre Moskalenko from the Russian Federation, a legend in the world of trampolining, had won three world championships and his name was etched in history. But over the last few years he had been absent from international results as he enjoyed a well-deserved retirement with his wife and young child. But on 31 August 1997, when it was announced trampoline would be included on the program for the 2000 Olympic Games, he jumped out of retirement onto a trampoline, and back on the international circuit. The title of Olympic champion was one he had never had the chance to win.

It was a long way to get back to form, as he needed to shed 24 kg to be at his best. Delighted Russian Federation officials rushed him back into the team for the 1998 world championships. It was much too soon, and he did not win a medal. But at the 1999 world championships, the old Moskalenko was back. He held his form and won his fourth world championship crown. At the Sydney 2000 Games, Moskalenko was simply brilliant, winning the gold medal. He could retire once more, with the knowledge he had won every title available to him.

Twelve men and 12 women competed in the sport's inaugural appearance as an Olympic discipline. The competition consisted of a qualification round and a final. In the qualification round, all athletes performed both a compulsory exercise and an optional exercise. The summation of the two marks determined the qualifying score.

On the basis of the score, the top eight men and women qualified for the finals. Points scored in the qualifying round did not count toward the final round. Gymnasts performed one at a time to delighted crowds, amazed at the the height, difficulty and intricacy of the athletes' moves.

Women's Competition

The equal top scorer in the women's qualifying round was Anna Dogonadze of Germany. She was the winner of the European Championships in 1998, and had won two World Cup rounds in 1999 at Aachen and Prague. Her score of 65.20 was the same as that of the Russian Federation's Irina Karavaeva. Following Karavaeva was Ukraine's Oxana Tsyhuleva with 65.10. The other five qualifiers for the final were Karen Cockburn of Canada, Natalia Karpenkova of Belarus, Rusudan Kopperia of Georgia, Akiko Furu of Japan and Ekaterina Khilko of Uzbekistan.

The final consisted of a single optional exercise. It was not a good omen to be considered one of the favourites in women's gymnastics. In both artistic and rhythmic gymnastics the



14

Gymnastics
Volume Two
Chapter Five



15

AMY SANCETTA/AP PHOTO

favourites had faltered at crucial times. The women's trampoline was no different. Anna Dogonadze led the competition through the compulsory and optional routines, but when it came to the final event, she made a minor miscalculation and jumped right out of medal contention. Dogonadze, who had been in bed for four days with a temperature of 38.5°C, lost her sense of timing, "It was very hard for me," she said through an interpreter. "I need a little time now for myself."

The Russian Federation, at this stage of the competition, had not been performing to their usual high standards in the artistic gymnastics competition. Their prestige was restored somewhat when Irina Karavaeva performed a thrilling routine to emerge as the trampoline gold medalist. The 25-year-old veteran had won the world championships in 1994 and again in 1999.

Known for the difficulty of her routine, Karavaeva has won every major title and had set her sights on winning the first Olympic medal in the sport. She said the competition had been a psychological challenge, but a great victory for herself and her sport. "I think trampolining is a beautiful sport and now that it is an Olympic sport I think it will become more popular all over the world, including Russia," she said.

Oxana Tsyhuleva of the Ukraine and Karen Cockburn of Canada were the silver and bronze medalists, respectively.

Men's Competition

The eight to qualify for the final were Alexandre Moskalenko of the Russian Federation, David Martin of France, Dimitri Polyarush of Belarus, Ji Wallace of Australia, Lee Brearley of Great Britain, Mathieu Turgeon of Canada, Alan Villafuerte of the Netherlands and Olexander Chernonos from the Ukraine.

During the single optional routine, Villafuerte came off the trampoline and Chernonos was injured and could not complete

his routine. As expected the gold medal went to the sport's icon, Moskalenko, with an almost flawless routine, scoring 41.7.

The winners of the silver and bronze medals provided great excitement for the crowd. Australia's Ji Wallace unexpectedly won the silver medal in scoring 39.30 points. As a child Wallace 'fell' into the sport of trampolining. "I was never involved in gymnastics. I was jumping around in the backyard, on the verandah, on the trampoline into the pool, into the tree. I landed in the rose bushes a couple of times and Mum didn't like it, so she took me up to the local youth club, and it went from there," Wallace said.

When the final results were posted, he threw his arms up in celebration. As the crowd chanted "Aussie! Aussie! Aussie!" Wallace grabbed an Australian flag and ran around the arena.

The bronze medal went to Canada's Mathieu Turgeon who scored 39.10. Turgeon grabbed the Canadian flag and raced across the podium. Even Moskalenko joined in the celebrations. Acting a little more restrained, he walked along the side of the floor, holding the Russian Federation's flag above his head.



16

JED JACOBSON/HALLSPORT

13. Opposite page:
Alexandre Moskalenko of Russia, a legend in the world of trampolining and three-time world champion, performs during the men's trampoline final

14. Judges watch Ji Wallace perform. Wallace, considered a long shot to win a medal, was elated after his silver medal win

15. David Martin of France performs his compulsory routine on the trampoline. Trampolinists, or bouncers, as they prefer to be called, hope their sport's Olympic debut will raise its profile internationally

16. The medalists in the women's trampoline final: Irina Karavaeva of the Russian Federation (centre) with the gold medal, Oxana Tsyhuleva of the Ukraine (left) with the silver and Karen Cockburn of Canada with the bronze





HANDBALL

The Dome, Sydney Olympic Park

Pavilion 2, Sydney Olympic Park

16 September–1 October 2000

For speed, power, athleticism and pure guile, it is difficult to match the sport of handball. For enthusiasm, noise and pure excitement, it was impossible to match spectator involvement in the handball tournament at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Match after match was played before capacity crowds, many dressed in national colours, waving flags or banners and screaming continuous support and encouragement for their favourite team.

Handball was the surprise package of the Sydney 2000 Games. Although the game was little known down under prior to the Games, Australia fielded a men's and a women's team as a host nation privilege. Neither the Australian men's nor the Australian women's team won a single game, but it didn't seem to matter. Once a sports-mad Australian public got a look at world class handball, they were hooked.

Lagging ticket sales suddenly boomed and, encouraged by enthusiastic stadium announcers Mike Noble of the USA and Paul Carr and Dave Carlson of Australia, crowds grew more and more animated. As one member of the Australian women's team put it, "The sport of handball is the real winner here."

The modern game of handball originated in Europe at the turn of the 19th century. The sport made its Olympic debut at the 1936 Berlin Games, then returned as a seven-a-side indoor game at Munich in 1972. A women's competition was added to the Olympic program four years later at the Montreal Games. Since 1976, 12 teams have participated in each men's Olympic tournament.

The women's competition began with six teams in Montreal, grew to eight in Seoul 1988 and ten in Sydney 2000. Olympic competition has always been dominated by European nations. Korea has become a force in recent years, especially in the women's game, winning gold at both the Seoul and Barcelona Games and silver in Atlanta.

The handball competition at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games took place in two adjacent venues, Pavilion 2 and The Dome, located at Sydney Olympic Park. All preliminary men's placement and men's quarterfinal matches were held in Pavilion 2, while the women's quarterfinals, plus all semifinals, classification and medal matches were held in The Dome.

Pavilion 2 had a seating capacity of 6000 and The Dome seated 10 000. Both venues were full houses throughout the tournament.

For the men's qualification, the host nation Australia and the teams gaining the first seven places at the 1999 world championship qualified automatically. In addition, one team qualified from each of the four continental federations: Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas.

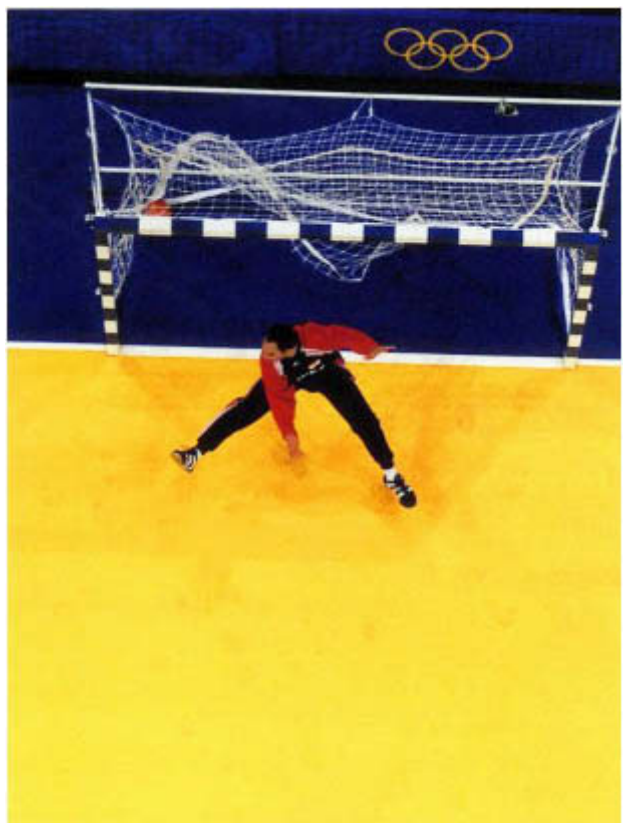
The 12 men's handball teams at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games were divided into two pools of six: Pool A – Cuba, Egypt, Germany, Korea, the Russian Federation, Yugoslavia; and Pool B – Australia, France, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia.

For the women's qualification, the host nation and the teams gaining the first five places at the 1999 world championship qualified automatically. As in the men's qualification, one team also qualified from each of the four continental federations. The ten teams in the women's handball competition were divided into two pools of five: Pool A – Angola, France, Hungary, Korea, Romania; and Pool B – Australia, Austria, Brazil, Denmark and Norway.

Each team played every other team in its pool once and was ranked according to how many games it won (two points for a win, one point for a draw, no points for a loss). The four teams with the highest rankings in each pool after the preliminaries went through to the quarterfinals, introduced for the first time at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. The winners of the quarterfinals progressed to the semifinals, while the losers played classification matches. Winners in the semifinal round played for the gold medal and the losers played for the bronze medal.

Men's Competition

Months before the first athletes arrived for the 2000 Olympic Games, Zoran Zivkovic, Egypt's Olympic handball coach, offered a bold prediction about the men's competition in



AL BELOALLSPORT

Handball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



ADAM PRETTY/ALLSPORT

1. World champion Sweden plays Tunisia in a preliminary match which Sweden won 27–18
2. Ausrele Fridrikas of Austria is challenged by Cristina Georgiana Varzaru of Romania in a classification match which Austria won 29–23
3. Sharaf Eldin Mohamed of Egypt is unable to stop a goal during the match against Yugoslavia

Handball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



4



MIKE HEWITT/ALLSPORT

Sydney. "Sweden will contest the gold medal with Russia in the Olympic final. Gold: Sweden; silver: Russia; bronze: France; fourth: Spain." Zivkovio based his prediction not only on world champion Sweden's two-year undefeated run, but also on the fact that the Scandinavian powerhouse had played perennial bridesmaid in Olympic handball competition. Sweden had never won an Olympic handball gold medal, finishing second to Croatia in Atlanta and second to the Russian Unified Team at the 1992 Barcelona Games.

Flash forward several months to a crowded and noisy men's handball final at the Superdome in Sydney. Just as Zivkovio predicted, it is Sweden versus the Russian Federation. Sweden emerged as the only unbeaten team in the men's handball preliminaries, although they had to survive a very physical match against Spain, 28–27. The world champions qualified first in Pool B, followed by France, Spain and Slovenia. In Pool A, the Russian Federation took top spot, followed by Germany, Yugoslavia and Egypt. During the Pool A preliminaries, Egypt stunned Germany 22–21 after trailing by three goals at the half.

In the quarterfinals, the Russian Federation beat Slovenia 33–22, Yugoslavia defeated France 26–21, Spain outlasted Germany 27–26 and Sweden stopped Egypt 27–23. The Russian Federation's 29–26 victory over Yugoslavia and Sweden's 32–25 win over Spain in the semifinals set up the gold medal match.

The Swedish team had every reason to be optimistic. Sweden had won both of the past two important finals against the Russian Federation – at the world championships in Egypt in 1999 and the European championships in Croatia in 2000. Winning a gold at the Olympic Games would be their fourth major championship in a row – something never achieved before.

With their vocal supporters in full cry, the Swedish team led by one goal at half time and appeared on their way to achieving their one missing major title, an Olympic gold medal. But then, in the words of Sweden's disappointed captain, Stefan Loevgren, the wheels fell off and his team experienced "pure disaster".

At the beginning of the second half, the Russian Federation reeled off seven consecutive goals to establish a lead that even the European and world champions could not overcome.

Final score: Russian Federation 28, Sweden 26. The Russian Federation's Alexander Tuchkin scored seven goals and his team captain, Andrei Lavrov, made 17 saves and took his third Olympic gold medal, having won with the Soviet Union in 1988 and the Russian Unified Team in 1992.

For the second consecutive time, Spain won the bronze medal, outlasting Yugoslavia 26–22, with the two wings, Rafael Guijosa and Antonio Ortega, scoring six and seven goals respectively. The bronze medal match started tentatively, but Spain came out the stronger after the break and put the game out of reach.

5



ADAM PRETTY/ALLSPORT

4. Rafael Guijosa of Spain rises to shoot past Jan Holpert of Germany in the men's quarterfinals
5. The Russian Federation's team is ecstatic after upsetting the favoured Swedes in the gold medal match



ODD ANDERSEN/AFP

The medal matches featured the top four teams in the world, but their ranking changed from the 1999 world championships, with the Russian Federation upsetting Sweden and Spain surprising Yugoslavia.

In the ranking from fifth to seventh, nothing changed from last year's world championships. Germany finished fifth by defeating France 25–22 and Egypt claimed seventh by beating Slovenia 34–28. Korea defeated Tunisia 24–19 to decide ninth and tenth and Cuba prevailed over Australia 26–24 for 11th and 12th places.

The International Handball Federation's (IHF) Sydney 2000 Men's All-Star Handball Team was: goalkeeper, Peter Gentzel of Sweden; left wing, Rafael Guijosa of Spain; pivot, Dragan Skrbic of Yugoslavia; right wing, Lev Voronin of the Russian Federation; left back, Stefan Loevgren of Sweden; centre back, Talant Dujshabaev of Spain; right back, Paek Won-Chul of Korea.

Women's Competition

The women's competition at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games equalled the men's in popularity but the outcome was more difficult to predict. Denmark was the defending Olympic champion, but the teams from Hungary, Austria and Norway were all strong contenders, and Korea had won silver in Atlanta and Olympic gold in 1988 and 1992. France, world championship silver medallists, and Romania, ranked fourth in the world, could not be discounted either.

At the end of the preliminary round of competition, Korea claimed top spot in Group A and Norway led Group B. In the quarterfinals, Korea beat Brazil 35–24, Denmark defeated France 28–26, Hungary outlasted Austria 28–27 in a rugged game and Norway beat Romania 28–16. This left Korea, Denmark, Hungary and Norway to battle it out for the medals. In the semifinal round, Hungary caused a major upset when they beat world and European champions Norway 28–23, setting the stage for a dramatic gold medal game between Hungary and Denmark.

The Hungarians led the Danes by two goals at the half (16–14) and then stretched their lead to six goals (23–17) with only 15 minutes left in the game. Unable to stop Bojana Radulovic, the former Yugoslavian back, Denmark called a time-out and changed their defence, playing Radulovic one-on-one. The Danes, who had had tasted victory in Atlanta,

knew what it was like to stand on the victory dais and began clawing their way back into the match, just as they did in Atlanta. Led by Anette Hoffmann Moberg, Janne Kolling and Camilla Andersen, Denmark came roaring back with six consecutive goals and went on to win the gold medal 31–27.

The bronze medal went to Norway after they won a close and controversial match 22–21 against Korea. In a tough game that saw seven two-minute suspensions and two red cards, Korea lost its star back and the competition's second highest goal scorer, Lee Sang-Eun, with a thigh injury early in the first half. Buoyed by a vocal crowd dressed predominantly in red and flying Norwegian flags, Norway levelled the scores at 15–15 in the second half. With just 90 seconds left in the game, Lee returned from her injury and limped onto the field to convert a seven-metre penalty, locking the scores at 21–21.

In the last minute of play, Norway's left wing, Mia Hundvin, scored, giving her side a one-point lead. From the restart, a Korean shot was saved by goalkeeper Heidi Tjugum, before Kjersti Grini received the ball and stood with it as the clock counted down. For this, Grini was given a red card, but her actions assured the one-point win and the bronze medal for Norway.

In the classification match for fifth and sixth places, the 1999 world championship silver and bronze medallists, France and Austria respectively, reversed order when Austria won an exciting game 33–32 in extra time. The classification match for seventh and eighth places also went into extra time with Romania defeating Brazil 38–33. Angola defeated Australia 26–18 to decide ninth and tenth places in the women's tournament.

The IHF Sydney 2000 Women's All-Star Handball Team was: goalkeeper, Heidi Tjugum of Norway; left wing, Anette Hoffmann Moberg of Denmark; centre back, Veronique Pecquex-Roland of France; right back, Janne Kolling of Denmark; left back, Kjersti Grini of Norway; pivot, Oh Seong-ok of Korea; right wing, Bojana Radulovic of Hungary.



ROBERT GIANFONALE/SPORT



7

ODD ANDERSEN/AFP



8

PATRICK KOVARIK/AFP

6. Danish fans turned the arena into a sea of red and white, cheering their women's team on to Olympic gold

7. Norwegian Elsa-Marthe Soerlie (front) braves a shot while dragged down by Denmark's Janne Kolling during a preliminary match

8. Danish captain Tonje Kjaergaard with her hard-earned gold medal

9. Agnes Farkas of Hungary shoots during the women's final. Hungary was leading by six goals but Denmark came back from their deficit to defend their Olympic title





HOCKEY

**State Hockey Centre, Sydney Olympic Park
16–30 September 2000**

The sophisticated, extremely technical, modern game of hockey has its origins in ancient times. As with many team sports, the game was formalised in Britain in the late 19th century. Today it is highly scientific and professional. The sport was first contested at the Olympic Games in 1908, though it was not until 1928, at Amsterdam, that it became a permanent feature for men. Despite being an entrenched feature of women's sport, and particularly girls' school sport throughout the world, it was not until 1980 that women entered the Olympic hockey competition.

For the home teams, the Hockeyroos and the Kookaburras, the competition in Sydney was, respectively, the best of dreams and the worst of nightmares. An amazing run of agonising 'near-miss' tragedies bedevilled the Australian men's team, the Kookaburras. While not losing a match in regular time during the whole Olympic tournament, they lost in a penalty shoot-out in a semifinal against the defending champions from the Netherlands. Australia had the better of the game but luck was not in their corner. The Australian women were as emphatic and commanding as their male counterparts, were unfortunate, and after these Games are arguably the most dominant contemporary Australian national sporting team.

The venue for the hockey matches was the State Hockey Centre at the Olympic Park complex. Playing and training pitches were excellent with state-of-the-art synthetic surfaces. The addition of temporary stands increased the capacity of the Hockey Centre to approximately 15 000, but still demand exceeded supply at times for the hordes of spectators seeking tickets, especially for the finals. The ends and eastern stand were nearly always full and the atmosphere and crowd participation were tremendous throughout. Animated home supporters and, particularly, the Dutch and British visitors, added an appropriate amount of colour to the festival. The musical interludes, at times loud, made the sessions fun and entertaining. Entry and exit being made through a single point meant there tended to be long queues before and after each session but the outstanding transport system soon whisked departing supporters away. The army of ever-pleasant volunteers added to the atmosphere and eased the waiting for spectators. Fortunately, there were only a couple of rainy days throughout the competition.

Women's Competition

The 15 000 sell-out crowd on the first day of the hockey competition was treated to some exciting hockey and surprise results. The first match of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games

saw Argentina's women's team beat their Korean opponents 3–2. New Zealand's team surprised European champions Germany, holding them to a 1–1 draw. The New Zealanders followed this up with an excellent 2–0 defeat of China two days later.

The Australians overcame stubborn British resistance to win their first game 2–1, in a match which ended in extraordinary circumstances with the British women being refused what was potentially a match-saving penalty corner. Confusion reigned amid long and vociferous British protests. The British women's team later lost 1–0 against the rapidly improving Argentinian team.

The die was cast in rather prophetic style when the Australian women's team strode past Argentina 3–1 in the fourth preliminary round. In their final preliminary game the Hockeyroos maintained their form, a 3–0 victory sending Korea out of the competition.

With the preliminaries completed, the teams for the women's super six were decided with the top three teams from the two pools progressing. They were Australia, China, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Argentina and Spain.

Australia progressed to the final by defeating New Zealand 3–0, the Netherlands 5–0 and China 5–1 in the medal pool round. Their final opponents also declared themselves. The Argentinian team moved with increasing confidence through the medal pool games. They beat the Netherlands in a fine attacking display. Goalkeeper Mariela Antoniska kept them in the medal round as they beat China in an end-to-end match, with Agustina Garcia leading the attack in style. The decisiveness of Argentina's 7–1 win over New Zealand before the gold medal game was not lost on the Australians.

The bronze play-off was between the Netherlands and Spain, with the Dutch comfortably winning the match 2–0.



3

CLIVE BRUNS/KUALLSPORT

Hockey
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Australia celebrates a goal during a match against the Netherlands
2. Germany's Marion Rodewald sits in disappointment after her team lost to the Netherlands in a preliminary match
3. The State Hockey Centre proved to be a venue which satisfied both athletes and spectators



2

BRICK STEVENS/
FAIRFAX

5

Hockey
Volume Two
Chapter Five



JASON REED/REUTERS

The silver medallists lined up in two parallel rows, formed a bridge with their hands, and then ushered the Hockeyroos through. "What we have achieved was important," said the Argentinean goalkeeper Mariela Antoniska, who kept out a remarkable 14 shots at goal.

Men's Competition

The Netherlands beat Great Britain 4-2 in the first men's game of the tournament. The fortunes of sport are such that Calum Giles' penalty shot for Great Britain in this game could have changed the course of the competition had he not flicked it straight to the goalie. But no one was to realise it at the time.



DARREN TINDALE/NEWS LTD

In the final the Hockeyroos turned back the Argentine challenge and took the gold medal game 3-1. Australia's Alyson Annan determined the course of the game through her dominance of the midfield. Australia was too experienced for the gallant first-time medallists from Argentina but the contest was not one-sided. Argentina stretched their opponents at times with pinpoint passes and greater speed around the field. They fought magnificently and never gave in and were rewarded with a goal late in the game.

As the crowd counted down the last ten seconds, the Hockeyroos embraced each other, linked arms and started celebrating. The Olympic favourites could finally feel relief. "I must say there was some tension," Australian captain Rechelle Hawkes said. "There were a few girls who were very nervous. It was pretty quiet before we came out. But once it started we all came together."

Departing coach and mentor, Ric Charlesworth, led a team of coaches, sports scientists and medical personnel supporting the Hockeyroos. He was visibly moved as he watched his players bask in their moment. "Afterwards, he just stood up briefly and said he was really, really proud of us," Australian playmaker Jenny Morris said.

As the Australians completed a victory lap around the field the home crowd roared its approval. A fine gesture of sporting goodwill and admiration came from the Argentinean players.

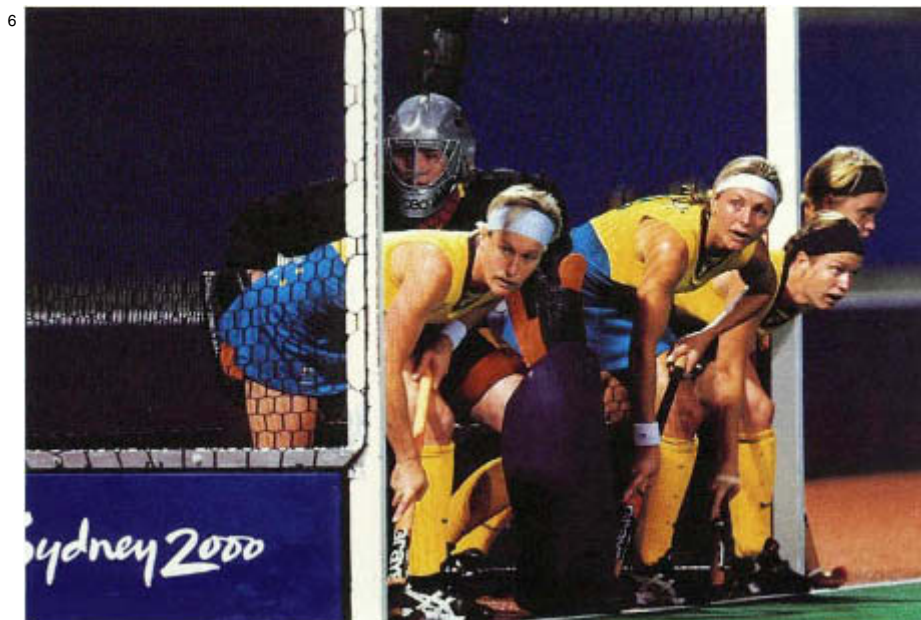
The Australian men's team beat newcomers Poland 4-0; however, most emphatic of the early men's preliminary games was Pakistan's 8-1 drubbing of Great Britain. While the British could not match the stick-work and the fast breaks of the Pakistanis, it was the shots from penalty corners by Sohail Abbas that crushed them. There were exuberant scenes featuring the many Pakistani supporters in the crowd. Many members of Sydney's multicultural communities turned out to support teams from their countries of origin.

Hockey minnow Canada nearly pulled off a major upset, being up 1-0 against Germany with ten minutes to go. They eventually lost 2-1 but goalkeeper Mike Mahood received many plaudits for his sensational display. In another match Malaysia's men valiantly held the eventual winners, the Netherlands, 0-0. The Netherlands had an apparently fair goal disallowed in the second half. Their official protest was later dismissed.

Poland had a sensational win on the fourth day of play, beating European giant Spain 4-1, with a team that was sourced virtually from a single club. This result, coming after Poland's loss to Australia two days before, was outstanding. Spain let in three goals in a 13-minute period, which cruelled their chance to progress. Spain later lost 5-1 to Argentina.

The Australian team's least impressive performance in the preliminaries was the 2-2 draw against Spain. In the first half the Kookaburras took the ball into the circle 24 times for just one shot on goal. Despite this poor conversion rate the Kookaburras looked clearly sharper and more creative, particularly in the second half. Other draws in the round included a remarkable 5-5 result between Poland and Argentina and a 1-1 tie for Germany and Pakistan.

After 11 days of competition in the men's preliminary games the rankings were finally decided. Pakistan headed pool A, after they had a convincing and, as it turned out for the Dutch, fortuitous win over the Netherlands 2-0. It seemed the Dutch practised brinkmanship throughout the tournament before retaining the Olympic championship. After losing to Pakistan in their final pool A match they walked off the field believing they had missed the semifinals. Two hours later they had a most unlikely reprieve when Great Britain beat Germany 2-1, tipping the Germans out of the semifinals and ushering back the Dutch on goal differences. Pool B saw Australia clear on top, after defeating Korea 2-1. Korea placed second and also entered the semifinals.



DARREN MCNAMARA/ALLSPORT

- 4. Argentina's Karina Masotta (front) is hugged by teammate Vanina Oneto after Masotta scored their third goal in the medal pool match against New Zealand
- 5. Fleur van der Kieft congratulates goalkeeper Daphne Touw after their team, the Netherlands, won over New Zealand. The Netherlands beat New Zealand twice in the tournament both times with a score of 4-3
- 6. Australia's Hockeyroos prepare to defend a penalty corner during the final against Argentina

6



ROBYN BECK/AFP

The men's final appeared to be a one-horse race, with little chance given the Koreans. Yet the final hockey match of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was a worthy contest for the gold. A hat-trick of goals from Dutch captain Stephan Veen and his winning penalty in the shoot-out was the best way for the veteran to retire. But the courageous Koreans fought back to nearly deny Veen his romantic exit. Down 3-1 with four minutes to go, they used their speedy forwards to make fast breaks and scored a brace of goals. The goals by their captain, Kang Keon-Wook, and Kim Kyung-Seok were fantastic conversions of penalty corners. Two desperate periods of extra time led to the final shoot-out, where the Dutch triumphed, holding their nerve with all five of their penalty converters scoring. Australia won the bronze medal match 6-3 against Pakistan.

Day 13 proved decidedly unlucky for two of the four men's semifinalists. The match between Australia and the Netherlands was a classic in which both teams' defences were magnificent in a fluctuating, epic battle. A penalty shoot-out determined the winner when both teams remained goalless after 70 minutes of regulation play and 15 minutes of extra time. The Netherlands edged out Australia 5-4 when Dutch goalkeeper Ronald Jansen saved Brent Livermore's penalty stroke. The Australians were devastated and Livermore fell to his knees in disappointment.

Asian hockey powers Pakistan and Korea duelled in a tight affair in the other semifinal. The Koreans sped off the goal line and shut down Pakistan's scoring machine, Sohail Abbas. Korea scored the only goal in the 57th minute when Song Seung-Tae flicked in after a penalty corner, thereby booking his team a place in the gold medal match.

Hockey aficionados agreed after the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games that the guard had not changed. The Australian Hockeyroos had remained favourites to retain their women's Olympic gold medal despite the fact that they had failed to make the final at the Champions Trophy earlier in the year. It was the first time in eight years that the Australian team had not made the final of a major tournament. The shock loss perhaps sharpened their Olympic resolve.

The Netherlands were expected to retain their men's champions' mantle, in spite of the retirements from their Atlanta gold winning team and their defeat at the European Nations Cup. With their gold medals both teams joined hockey's exclusive 'consecutive gold' club, the first to do so since the legendary Indian run of six gold medals ended at Melbourne in 1956.

Hockey
Volume Two
Chapter Five



7. Pakistan's Muhammad Nadeem (centre) jumps over the sticks of Korea's Yeo Woon-Kon (left) and Kim Jung-Chul to chase the ball during the men's hockey semifinal

8. The Netherlands, defending Olympic champions, celebrate their Sydney 2000 gold medal

9. A moment of high drama: Brent Livermore of Australia is devastated after missing a goal during the penalty shoot-out deciding the semifinal against the Netherlands



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MARK DADSWELL/SPORT THE LIBRARY





JUDO

**Sydney Exhibition Centre
Halls 1 and 2, Darling Harbour
16–22 September 2000**

Japan's Ryoko Tamura was the overwhelming favourite for gold in the women's judo under 48 kg division in Sydney. Her trophy cabinet contained the shiniest hardware from four world championships and more than ten other international meets, including two Olympic silver medals. In fact, over the last eight years Tamura had been beaten only twice, both times in the all-important finals at the 1992 and 1996 Olympic Games.

The Olympic gold medal had eluded Tamura in Barcelona when she lost to France's Cecile Nowak. In Atlanta, Tamura, then double world champion, lost to North Korea's Kye Sun Hui. Tamura was devastated and considered retirement.

"I was questioning myself over and over. Can I endure all the tough training again? Can I win the gold in Sydney? Then I started to think that it was easy to retire, but that I would regret it for the rest of my life. That's why I decided to try for Sydney," Tamura said. She came to Sydney with one goal in mind. "The best case is the gold medal. The worst case is also the gold medal. I'd like to make the year 2000 the most memorable one in my life. I have learnt and experienced a lot from the last two Olympic Games. My motto is challenge. My aim is to win."

When the pocket judoka walked out on the mat for her gold medal bout, the venue was a sea of red and white. Tamura is so famous in Japan she has a comic strip modelled on her and 350 websites are devoted to her. Admirers dressed in matching uniforms chanted and cheered, all in a bid to carry their hero onward to the medal she has so desired.

In the final, it took less than 40 seconds for Tamura, the smallest judoka in the tournament, to capture her missing gold. She defeated the Russian Federation's Lioubov Brouletova with a perfect uchi-mata (inner thigh throw).

It was third time lucky for Tamura, and also the beginning of an avalanche of Japanese successes that would see them win eight medals in the judo competition.

The venue for judo, the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre at Darling Harbour, was just minutes from Sydney's central business district and 18 km from Sydney Olympic Park and the Olympic Village. Five other sports shared the Centre: boxing, fencing, weightlifting, volleyball and wrestling. Given that Sydney is the 'Harbour City' and this site one of its major tourist attractions, it was a delightful location, where spectators could spill out between and after contests to enjoy the stunning waterfront views and a wide variety of eating establishments.

The Competition

The competition schedule, an elimination format with a double repechage, was conducted over seven days and attracted large audiences of up to 7000 to the preliminary bouts and the finals. Four hundred athletes from 90 countries competed, and although this suggests the worldwide diffusion of the sport, Japan clearly dominated in this Olympic event. Judoka were divided into two tables, A and B, by means of a draw, with two groups in each table. Seeding of judoka was based on previous world championship results. The winners of each group progressed to the final, the remainder taking part in the repechage. An innovation for these Games was the wearing of a blue judogi by one of the contestants, making it easier for spectators to distinguish combatants.

Japan began the tournament by winning the first two gold medals on offer at the Darling Harbour arena. After Tamura's victory the atmosphere was perfect for her male counterpart, Tadahiro Nomura, to emulate her in the men's -60kg match to follow.

Women's -52 kg

World championship silver medallist Legna Verdecia of Cuba in the under 52 kg defeated her conqueror to claim Olympic gold. Verdecia faced and defeated the world champion Narazaki Noriko of Japan. The bronze medals went to Kye Sun Hui from North Korea and Liu Yuxiang from China.

Women's -57 kg

Host nation Australia had won only two bouts in Atlanta in 1996, but in Sydney, with a team of seven athletes, things looked brighter.

Judo

*Volume Two
Chapter Five*



1. Legna Verdecia of Cuba jumps up after defeating Japan's Noriko Narazaki in the women's under 52 kg class after Narazaki had almost won the fight in the opening seconds
2. Japan's Ryoko Tamura receives an Olympic gold medal at last
3. Tadahiro Nomura of Japan pins down Manolo Poulot of Cuba during the men's under 60 kg event



2

BILLY STICKLAND/ALLSPORT



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BILLY STICKLAND/ALLSPORT

Judo
Volume Two
Chapter Five



4. Hishigbat Erdenet-Od of Mongolia (blue) fights Kie Kusakabe of Japan in the 57 kg preliminaries
5. France's Celine Lebrun cries after losing the gold in the women's under 57 kg class to China's Tang Lin
6. Mark Huizinga celebrates his victory over Brazil's Carlos Honorato in the men's under 90 kg class and the Netherlands' first judo gold since 1972



Maria Pekli, who had competed for Hungary at the 1992 and 1996 Olympic Games, became Australia's second ever judo medallist, winning a bronze in the women's under 57 kg class. Ted Boronovskis had won Australia's first judo medal in 1964 when the sport had its Olympic debut.

Pekli fought off Italy's Cinzia Cavazzuti for an emotional bronze medal placing, heightened by the fact that she had twisted

her knee in her opening bout. After her popular success she expressed the hope that her achievement would "boost the sport in her new country".

Spain's Isabel Fernandez, Atlanta bronze medallist, defeated Driulys Gonzalez of Cuba, her nemesis from the Atlanta Games and world championships, to win the gold.

Men's –60 kg

Tadahiro Nomura repeated Tamura's success for Japan in the men's under 60 kg class when he scored an ippon, winning in a decisive manner over Asian champion Jung Bu-Kyung of Korea. Nomura, the gold medallist at Atlanta four years earlier, now joins a legendary group of athletes, including fellow Japanese judoka Hitoshi Saito, who have won successive Olympic golds.

Women's –63 kg

France's Severine Vandenhende, a past world champion, battled her way through the early draw to reach the finals in this class, where she defeated China's Li Shufang for the gold. Neither of the women had placed in the recent world championships – but then the Sydney 2000 Games proved to be a difficult tournament for most of the reigning world champions. Keiko Maeda of Japan was yet another of the favoured competitors who did not contest the final in this division.

Korea's Jung Sung-Sook, favourite for the event, won the bronze, just as she did in Atlanta four years earlier, with Gella Vandecaveye of Belgium winning the other bronze.

Men's –66 kg

In the under 66 kg Turkey's Huseyin Ozkan turned the tables on his conqueror in the world championships to claim Olympic gold. Ozkan took the honours from world champion Larbi Benboudaoud of France. The bronze medals were won by Italy's Girolamo Giovanazzo and Georgia's Giorgi Vazagashvili.

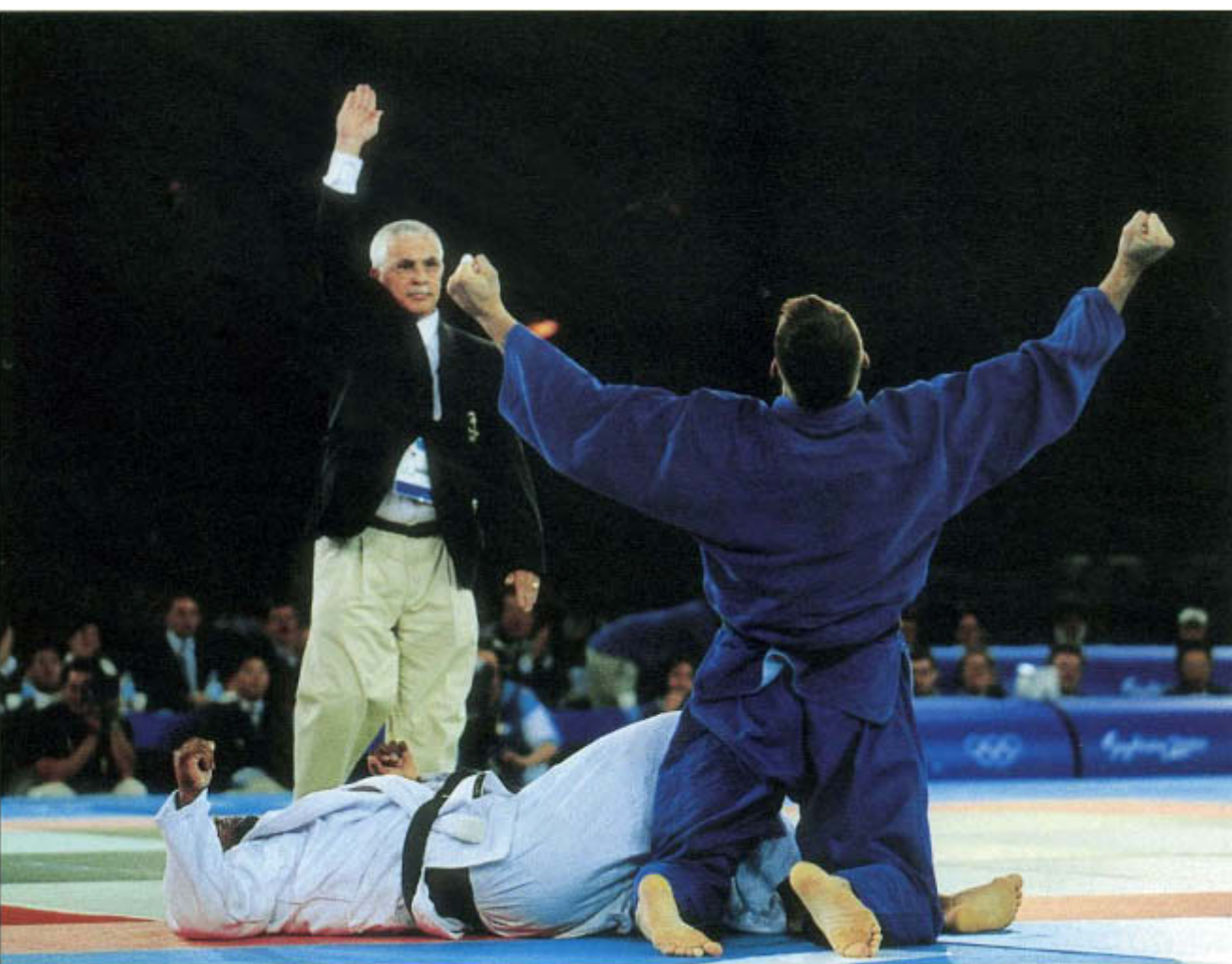
Women's –70 kg

In the women's under 70 kg competition world champion Sibelis Veranes of Cuba defeated England's Kate Howey with 1996 Olympic titleholder Cho Min-Sun of Korea and Ylenia Scapin of Italy taking bronze.

Men's –73 kg

The men's under 73 kg competition witnessed a surprise win for Italy's Giuseppe Maddaloni, who defeated Tiago Camilo of Brazil for the gold medal. Vsevolods Zelonijs of Latvia and Anatoly Laryukov of Belarus took the bronze medals. Maddaloni had won the European championship in his weight division at Bratislava in 1999 but no-one had expected him to feature in the final medal contests in Sydney.

The Olympic gold medallist from Atlanta, Kenzo Nakamura of Japan, was put out of contention by Jimmy Pedro who, it was predicted, would give the USA its first judo gold. But it was not to be – Pedro was defeated by Laryukov for the bronze.



Women's –78 kg

Little known judoka Tang Lin of China upset a strong field to win the gold medal in the women's under 78 kg. Her win over France's Celine Lebrun was greeted with howls of protest, with Lebrun bursting into tears on hearing the judgement. She had led for most of the bout but was penalised for non-attacking while trying to protect her advantage. Japan's Noriko Anno, favourite to win the event, was beaten in the opening round by eventual bronze medallist Emanuela Pierantozzi of Italy. Simona Marcela Richter from Romania took the other bronze.

Women's +78 kg

At a tournament where many favourites were beaten, Cuba's world champion Daima Mayelis Beltran lost to 26-year-old Yuan Hua of China in the women's +78 kg division. It was China's second gold and a brilliant win. The Chinese women had performed well throughout the competition and impressed knowledgeable onlookers. Beltran, unable to match Yuan's aggression, was held down on several occasions and Yuan was awarded a yusei-gachi, or points, decision. Mayumi Yamashita from Japan and Kim Seon-Young from Korea won the bronze medals.

Men's –81 kg

The judo competition in Sydney produced many upsets. Reputations were won and lost at these Games. In the men's -81 kg a surprise victory produced yet another Japanese star. Until this competition, Makoto Takimoto's only claim to fame was his Japanese title. Now he is the Olympic champion and a hero in the nation that claims this sport as its own. He defeated South Korea's former world champion Cho In-Chul with bronze medals going to Nuno Delgado of Portugal and Aleksei Budolin of Estonia, who defeated reigning Olympic champion Djamel Bouras of France.

Men's –90 kg

Injury to Japan's world champion and event favourite Hidehiko Yoshida added further drama in the men's under 90 kg division. Yoshida, trying for his second gold after winning in Barcelona in 1992 and the world championship in 1999, was thrown for the perfect ippon only 50 seconds into his bout with Carlos Honorato of Brazil. He was seriously injured in the fall and carried from the mat on a stretcher. At age 31 it was a disappointing end to his career.

Honorato, the Pan American champion, went on to contest the final with Mark Huizinga of the Netherlands. Huizinga, Atlanta bronze medallist and triple European champion, won the gold. Frederic Demontfaucon of France and Russian Mashurenko of the Ukraine were awarded bronze medals for their decisive matches.

Men's –100 kg

Japan's young superstar, Kosei Inoue, became Olympic champion in the men's under 100 kg division. The 22-year-old student at Tokai University is relatively short, 184 cm, for his weight but makes up for it with his speed and skill.

Inoue's win was never in doubt. He was impressive in all his matches and his throw of Canada's Nicolas Gill in the final brought the crowd to its feet. Stephane Traineau of France and Iouri Stepkine of the Russian Federation took the bronze medals.

Men's +100 kg

On the last night of competition at these Games, veteran David Douillet of France added his name to the legends of the sport, becoming the second man to win medals at three Olympic judo tournaments. Douillet, a father of three, retired in 1997 after a fourth world title, but made a triumphant return to the Olympic stage. By taking the gold medal in the heavyweight division, Douillet joins his countryman Angelo Parisi in an elite group of judoka. While Douillet was the reigning Olympic champion, his victory over pre-Games favourite, Japan's dual world champion Shinichi Shinohara, was considered another upset. However, at least the Japanese medalled. Atlanta was the first Olympic Games where Japan had not won a medal in this class, apart from Moscow 1980 which it boycotted. Tamerlan Tmenov of the Russian Federation and Indrek Pertelson of Estonia were awarded the bronze medals after their decisive wins. Tmenov was considered unlucky not to have contested the gold medal match.

Ninety countries contested the judo events at the Sydney Games with Japan, Cuba, France, the USA and Australia providing full teams. Twenty-five of these countries won medals but Japan, the 'home nation of judo', with four gold and as many minor medals was restored to its pre-eminence in the sport. While Japan covets this dominance, the International Judo Federation was also happy to see medals widely dispersed. The number of countries contesting the finals in Sydney confirmed the success of their program.

Judo
Volume Two
Chapter Five



7. Japan's legend in the making Kosei Inoue (right) fights Nicolas Gill of Canada in the final of the under 100 kg class

8. David Douillet, flagbearer for the French team, retained his Olympic title to add to his four world titles

9. Douillet's victory in the over 100 kg final sparked a passionate response among the French fans



7

GABRIEL BOUYS/AFP



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DAVID LEAHALL/SPORT



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ANDREW WONG/REUTERS





MODERN PENTATHLON

Pavilion 2, Sydney Olympic Park

Sydney International Aquatic Centre, Sydney Olympic Park

Baseball Stadium, Sydney Olympic Park

30 September–1 October 2000

Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the Modern Olympic Games, admired the all-round athlete. He sponsored the debut of a modernised version of the pentathlon at the Stockholm Olympic Games in 1912; his concept was that of participants emulating the hypothetical deeds of a cavalry officer who, caught in enemy territory, has his horse shot from under him. The running, shooting, fencing, riding and swimming segments of the sport represent his struggles with nature and the enemy as he escapes to his own lines. The competence required in these five disciplines means that modern pentathlon demands the most diverse skills of any Olympic sport. For most of its Olympic history, modern pentathlon has been an individual and team sport for men. Yet women have been competing at international tournaments for many years. The first official world championship for women was held in London in 1981. In 1998, the International Olympic Committee finally approved the inclusion of a women's modern pentathlon event for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Originally modern pentathlon was a five-day event, but this format was not conducive to spectator or media interest. In an attempt to lift the discipline's public appeal, a one-day format was scheduled for the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games. This format continued in Sydney, where athletes and spectators moved across three different venues throughout the day.

Modern pentathlon is now a frenzied event where, during one long day of competition, athletes must fire 20 shots at a target with an air pistol, fence with an épée sword, swim 200 m, negotiate a show jumping course on a horse drawn for them at random and finally, when nearly exhausted, run a 3000 m cross-country course. The fencing and riding components are considered to be the most important for success as the head-to-head fencing duels and the randomly selected horses present the best opportunities for substantial gains – or losses – in points. Standings in the competition tend to fluctuate dramatically from one event to the next and the winner often comes from the back to the front in the final running leg.

Forty-eight athletes competed in Sydney, 24 men and 24 women, making it the smallest, in terms of number of participants, of any Olympic sport.

Men's Competition

Shooting and fencing kicked off the men's modern pentathlon competition at Pavilion 2, Sydney Olympic Park. In the shooting, using a 4.5 mm air pistol, 20 shots – all fired from

the same position – were fired at 20 targets, with one shot per target allowed. Belarus Pavel Dovgal took the early lead, shooting a total of 1168 modern pentathlon points (MP points). He was followed by Nicolae Papuc of Romania and Vadim Tkachuk of the Ukraine, with the favourite, Hungary's Gabor Balogh, in sixth place.

After the shooting event, athletes prepared themselves for fencing. The competition was a round-robin format, where every athlete fought against every other athlete. The épées, 110 cm in length and weighing 100 gm, were equipped with an electronic pressure-sensitive spring tip. One-touch bouts, limited to one minute, were executed according to an order drawn prior to the competition.

As a hit was made, the winner identified himself with a shout and the crowd responded with cheers. The athletes shook hands, then quickly moved onto the next round to keep the competition with its rigorous schedule on time. France's Olivier Clergeau scored 1000 MP points and pushed himself into the lead after two events, closely followed by Horacio de la Vega of Mexico and Gabor Balogh of Hungary.

The competition then moved venues to the Sydney International Aquatic Centre for the swimming. The 200 m freestyle was swum with three heats of eight swimmers each. Lanes were allocated according to personal best times from the preceding season. This was the first time that the swimming event covered 200 m instead of 300 m. Germany's Eric Walther set a new Olympic record for modern pentathlon in the pool with a time of 2:00.71.



Modern Pentathlon

Volume Two

Chapter Five

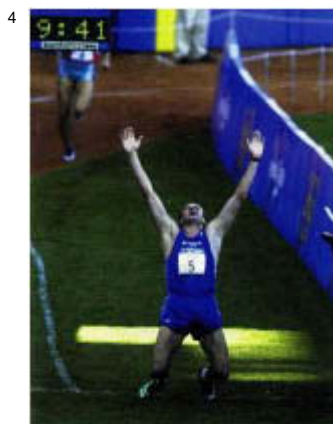


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MARK DADSWELL/SPORT

1. A pentathlete in action during the riding competition at the Baseball Centre. Twelve obstacles and 380 m had to be cleared in 132 seconds
2. Eric Walther of Germany on Tumberumba during the riding event of the modern pentathlon
3. Italy's Stefano Pecci loses his balance against Andrejus Zadneprovskis of Lithuania in the men's fencing, the second event of the day

Modern Pentathlon
Volume Two
Chapter Five



The Baseball Stadium at Sydney Olympic Park, where the riding and running were held, was the next venue. Athletes in modern pentathlon do not use their own horses. Horses were drawn at random from a pool and athlete and horse had 20 minutes to become accustomed to each another.

The horses were well-prepared by Charles Sturt University in the Riverina area of New South Wales especially for this Olympic event. However, they tested the competence of the riders and their ability to control the horse. Dmitry Svatkovsky of the Russian Federation, riding the highly spirited Wantabadgery, was the best rider on the day and forced his way from seventh to first after four events.

An accomplished rider, Svatkovsky was within striking distance of the leaders going into the final event of the competition. The name Wantabadgery is an Aboriginal word and means 'fighting place'. It is the name given to a location north of Wagga Wagga on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River that was the scene of many a bushranger siege. Nearly all the horses were given names that honoured towns or regions of the Australian bush. Wantabadgery was also ridden by China's Qian Zhenhua, who was bucked out of the saddle. He and three others did not complete the riding course.

The final event was the 3000 m run. The starting times of the contestants were staggered according to the points differential between each runner and the leader after the first four events. For the first time in Olympic history, the race started with two leaders: Olivier Clergeau of France and Velizar Iliev of the USA.

The handicap start ensured the first to cross the finish line would be the winner of the whole competition.

Svatkovsky started 19 seconds behind the race leaders, and started chasing them down. He overtook them at the 1500 m mark and crossed the finishing line with his arms raised in triumph and then dropped to his knees. He was closely followed by Balogh and Dovgal. The leaders before the run, Clergeau and Iliev, ran more than a minute outside the fastest time and slumped to eighth and ninth overall. The silver medal went to Gabor Balogh of Hungary and the bronze to Pavel Dougal of Belarus.

Until this competition the Olympic individual medal was the only thing missing from Svatkovsky's trophy cabinet. A two-time world champion, he had won the European Championships three times and had treble World Cup victories. He won a silver medal in the teams event at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, and finished fourth in Atlanta.

Svatkovsky earned his gold medal by performing at a consistently high level throughout the day. He placed 14th in shooting, eighth in fencing, seventh in swimming, first in riding and had the fourth fastest run.

Women's Competition

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Games celebrated 100 years of female participation at the Olympic Games. Modern pentathlon joined in the celebrations with a women's event for the first time.



With the first Olympic title up for grabs, the competition was tight and enthralling and, like the men's competition, only decided in the closing stages of the run.

The women had five events and ten hours' hard labour ahead of them. At the end of the day, Great Britain's Stephanie Cook fell in tears into her team-mate Kate Allenby's arms. Cook had turned a 49-second deficit after four events to win the Olympic Games gold medal.

Cook shot 178 out of a possible 200, and was in eighth place after the opening event of shooting. She was 18th after the fencing, her weakest discipline, with ten wins and 13 defeats. In the pool she swam a personal best by almost a second, and moved up to 12th place. She had a superb round in the riding, where her horse knocked just two fences down, but was still in eighth position. That meant she would start the 3000 m run 49 seconds behind the leader, the USA's Emily deRiel.

As spectators waited for the running to commence, the crowd literally roared while performing round after round of Mexican waves to the loud, boppy music. The gap seemed too great to close, but as a former cross country representative for her country Cook was an accomplished runner. She had made up the deficit of more than a minute on her American opponent in the World Championships. After the first kilometre she had moved from eighth to third position.

After the second 1000 m she was only seven seconds behind the leaders. In the final lap she caught teammate Allenby and with 400 m remaining surged past deRiel, winning the women's first ever modern pentathlon Olympic gold medal.

As Allenby crossed the line the two British athletes embraced. "I am almost speechless," said Cook. "I can't believe it. There are so many people to thank. I knew we could get two people on the podium." Her beaten American rival, deRiel said, "I was just waiting for Stephanie to pass me."

The riding event proved difficult for the women. The rules determine that a rider thrown twice is eliminated from the event, or if a rider falls off, and the jump is damaged, the clock is stopped and the fence rebuilt. If the jump has not been damaged, the clock continues until the rider can remount and regain control of the horse.

The treble jump on the course caused problems with many horses refusing the jump or barging straight through it. After three refusals the rider can proceed to the next fence, but marks are deducted.

Three entrants were eliminated after falling from their horses. Italy's Fabiana Fares was removed from the field on a stretcher after parting company with the ironically named Smooth Operator.

Although Janna Shubenok of Belarus finished her round on Walla Walla without falling off, she could not stop him and gave a panicked wave to the crowd as they raced straight out of the field of play. Despite this Shubenok scored well with 1010 MP points, and went on to finish in sixth place overall.



In total, almost 15 000 spectators enjoyed the modern pentathlon. It was not only the athletes that spend the long day moving from venue to venue. The crowd followed them and as the day wore on they built a relationship with the competitors and one another, becoming more vocal and supportive as the day progressed. As was the case at many events at the Sydney 2000 Games, the more rabid of the supporters really became part of the show, with faces painted in national colours and fluoro-tinted hair. Of course the green and gold of Australia tended to predominate.

The IOC had threatened to withdraw modern pentathlon from an Olympic Games program already crowded with sports, as it was thought to have limited spectator appeal. Sydney 2000 would certainly have changed that. By the end of the men's event IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch himself had turned up to cheer the winner across the finish line. Baron de Coubertin's modern pentathlon was a success in its current format.



Modern Pentathlon

Volume Two
Chapter Five



4. Opposite page: Dmitry Svatkovsky sinks to his knees after a perfectly timed 3000 m run that wrapped up the ten-hour competition

5. Opposite page: Competitors line up for the horse draw. After the horses were allocated, each athlete had 20 minutes to prepare for the riding event

6. Kitty Chiller (front) takes aim during the pistol shooting. Chiller, eleven-time Australian champion, finished 16th

7. Gold medalist Stephanie Cook of Great Britain (centre), shares her joy with silver and bronze medalists Emily de Riel (left) and Kate Allenby

8. Cook on her way to winning the last event of the day and becoming the first female Olympic gold medalist in modern pentathlon





ROWING

**Sydney International Regatta Centre, Penrith Lakes
17–24 September 2000**

Great Britain's Steve Redgrave, known as Mr Rowing, came to the Sydney 2000 Games chasing a fifth successive Olympic gold medal. Lucky spectators at the Sydney International Regatta Centre on the first day of the finals roared with delight as Redgrave's boat in the men's coxless four crossed the finish line first.

After the victory high-five with each of his crew, Redgrave and his crew rowed slowly up and down past the cheering stands, the occasional impassioned spectator jumping in the water to salute them. One resolute supporter even swam out to the boat to present them with the Union Jack flag.

Triple gold medallist Elisabeta Lipa from Romania (1984, 1992, 1996) was entered in the women's double sculls and the eight. If successful in both she would match Redgrave's tally. She ended one short, but vowed to compete in Athens in four years in another attempt to win her fifth gold medal.

In addition to these two rowing superstars seven men were hoping to end the Sydney 2000 Games as triple gold medallists – Agostino Abbagnale of Italy, Stephan Volkert, Andre Willms and Andreas Hajek of Germany, Mike McKay and James Tomkins of Australia and Matthew Pinsent of Great Britain. Competitions between reigning world and Olympic champions added to the excitement of an event that attracted over 20 000 people to each day of the finals.

Over 500 athletes competed in the 14 events, including six for women. The competition format followed International Rowing Federation (FISA) regulations with the usual heats, repechages, semifinals and finals determining medallists in all classes and events.

The Sydney International Regatta Centre was located at Penrith Lakes, 47 km from Sydney Olympic Park and the Olympic Village. Purpose designed and opened in 1996, the competition course had an east to west orientation and a consistent five-metre depth. The 2300 m nine-lane Olympic course, with wave-absorbing banks, ensured fair rowing conditions for all competitors, regardless of lane draw.

An innovation for these Games was the use of the French designed AGSO start system. Boats were held in place by frames under the water. On the starter's signal the frame dropped, releasing the boat. This system eliminated false starts and helped to stabilise boats against the wind. A large lake for warm up/cool down purposes adjoined the competition area and there was seating for 17 000 spectators. Another 10 000 could be accommodated on the grass-covered banks of the course.

The Competition

An unprecedented 26 of the 51 competing countries had representatives qualify for the finals. Host country Australia had the largest qualification total, with boats in ten of the 14 events, followed by the USA and Germany with nine each. South Africa and Japan had crews in Olympic rowing finals for the first time.

Women's Single Sculls

World and Olympic champion Ekaterina Karsten (nee Khodotovich) of Belarus is acknowledged as the best woman sculler in the world and was expected to win this event. Although she did not lead from start to finish as expected she did win – by just one hundredth of a second. European champion Rumyana Neykova of Bulgaria sculled superbly in front of her and lost in a photo finish.

The world's most sophisticated timing and photo finish equipment took 23 minutes to detect a one millimetre margin in a race that had covered two gruelling kilometres. It took so long that the second final on the race program had been rowed and decided before people knew who had won the first. Germany's Katrin Rutschow-Stomporowski was third. Australia's Georgina Douglas placed fifth. The first three had been the placegetters at the 1999 world championships and only Neykova changed a place, third to second. Karsten was again Olympic champion but in the most dramatic circumstances.

Rowing

*Volume Two
Chapter Five*



1. In the women's quadruple sculls, Germany took the gold, followed by Great Britain and the Russian Federation
2. Great Britain's Steven Redgrave receives his fifth Olympic gold medal from Princess Anne
3. James Cracknell, Steve Redgrave, Tim Foster and Matthew Pinsent celebrate gold in the men's coxless fours



2
ANDY CLARK/REUTERS



3
MIKE HEWITT/ALLSPORT

Rowing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



Men's Single Sculls

A talented field was entered in this race, including 1996 Atlanta gold medallist Xeno Mueller of Switzerland and New Zealand's world champion Rob Waddell. The final was almost a match race between these two with the other oarsmen contesting third place. They rowed stroke for stroke over the latter section of the race but Mueller eventually lost to the big New Zealander, with Marcel Hacker of Germany third and Derek Porter, Canada's silver medallist at Atlanta, in fourth place. Mueller's comment after the Games exemplified the atmosphere of the Olympic rowing competition: "...he's a gentle giant [Waddell] ... if anyone's going to beat me, I'm glad it was him."

Women's Coxless Pairs

Olympic champion from Atlanta in 1996, Australia's Kate Slatter, and new partner Rachael Taylor were unable to match the brilliant Romanian pair of Georgeta Damian and Doina Ignat. Melissa 'Missy' Ryan and Karen Kraft of the USA, who led for much of the race, tired and were relegated to third place. South Africa, in Olympic rowing for the first time, was a creditable fifth behind Canada.

Men's Coxless Pairs

With Great Britain's Steve Redgrave moving from this event to the coxless four for these Games, the contest was opened up to a number of fancied contenders. Drew Ginn and James Tomkins of Australia had won the 1999 world championship, making Tomkins the only rower to win a world championship in every sweep-oared event. Although he was no longer paired with Ginn, Matt Long having replaced Ginn, expectations were high among the parochial spectators. No one, it seems, had anticipated a French win. In what commentator and former Australian Oarsome Foursome gold medallist Nick Greene described as "the most amazing row I have ever seen", France's team of Michel Andrieux and Jean-Christophe Roland swept through the field to defeat the USA's Ted Murphy and Sebastian Bea who won the silver medal with bronze going to Australia.

Women's Double Sculls

The German pair of Jana Thieme and Kathrin Boron were expected to win this race – and they did. The world

champions led from start to finish in a dominating and masterful exhibition of rowing skill. They won by several lengths from the Netherlands team of Pieta van Dishoeck and Eeke van Nes. The Lithuanian pair of Birute Sakickiene and Kristina Poplavskaja defeated the USA's Carol Skricki and Ruth Davidon for the bronze medal.

Men's Double Sculls

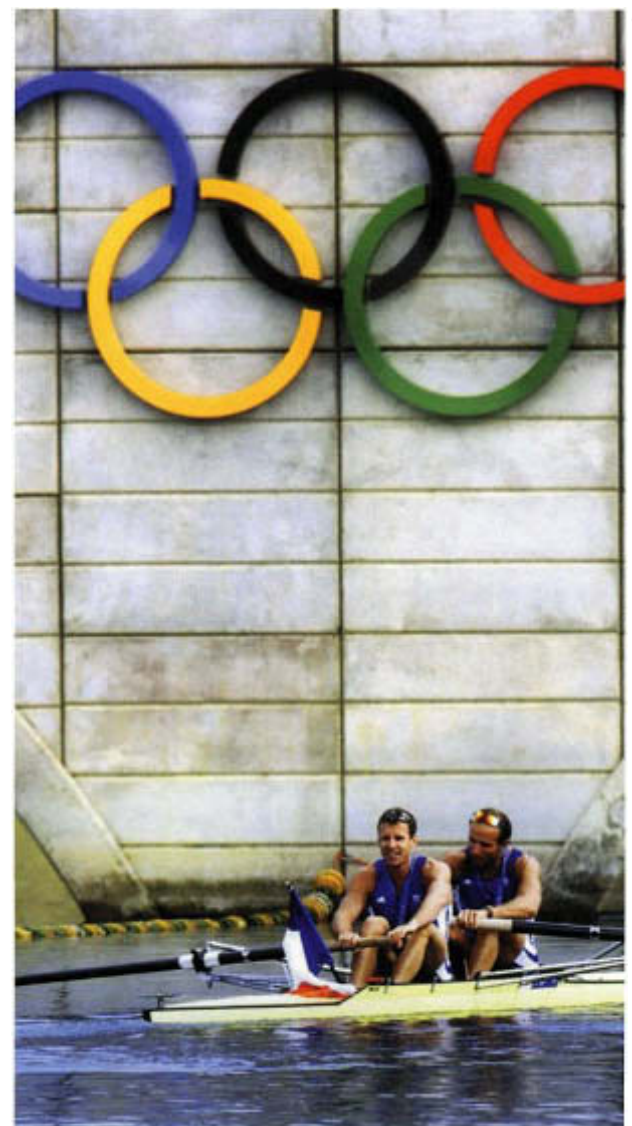
The team to beat was Slovenia's world champion combination of Luka Spik and Iztok Cop. They had the world's best time, 6:04.37 from St Catharines, Canada in 1999, and went into the Olympic final as favourites for the event. They set the pace and were never headed. Olaf Tufte and Fredrik Raen Bekken of Norway won silver and Giovanni Calabrese and Nicola Sartori of Italy won bronze. Both these teams challenged at the finish but were unable to catch the gold medallists.

Men's Coxless Fours

With legendary Steve Redgrave in the number two seat, expectations of a British victory were high. They led from start to finish, with Italy in second place and the Australian crew third. Redgrave won a historic fifth Olympic title and was awarded a gold pin by President Juan Antonio Samaranch to commemorate his incredible feat. Given that he had won nine world championships it was no wonder he had



4. Rob Waddell of New Zealand, world champion in the men's single sculls, strokes his way to gold
5. Luke Taylor jumps into the water to congratulate his sister Rachael and partner Kate Slatter on their silver medal in the women's coxless pairs
6. Surprise winners in the men's coxless pairs: Jean Christophe Roland and Michel Andrieux of France



been described in Britain as 'the athlete of the century'! Retirements had brought to an end the stunning success of the Oarsome Foursome from Australia, but their heirs, Bo Hanson, Ben Dodwell and twins Geoff and James Stewart, won bronze for their efforts and the Italian team of Valter Molea, Riccardo Deirossi, Lorenzo Carboncini and Carlo Mornati won the silver. However, the British team of James Cracknell, Steven Redgrave, Tim Foster and Matthew Pinsent were the popular and favoured victors on the day.

In a tremendous battle for supremacy the British fended off a late charge from Italy, winners of the Olympic qualifying regatta in Lucerne, to take gold. Molea's comment after the race that "Redgrave hasn't lost for 20 years. It was a great honour to come so close because he is unique in rowing history", indicates the respect Redgrave enjoys from his peers. Only Hungarian fencer Aladar Gerevich, six between 1932 and 1960, has won gold medals at more Olympic Games than Redgrave.

Women's Lightweight Double Sculls

Reigning world and Olympic champions Romania were favourites for this event. That Constanta Burcica was pairing with Angela Alupei rather than Camelia Macovicuic made no difference to the expected result. The Romanians, who came from behind to win the Vienna World Cup, were renowned for their speed and strength over the second half of the race.

In Sydney they once again showed their finishing speed. The German pair of Valerie Viehoff and Claudia Blasberg and the USA's Christine Collins and Sarah Garner tried to 'steal' the race early, but in a well-timed finish the Romanians rowed them down in the last 500 m to win the gold. Germany was second, USA third, with the fancied Australian pair of Sally Newmarch and Virginia Lee just out of the medals.



Men's Lightweight Double Sculls

World champion Leonardo Pettinari of Italy was expected to win the lightweight double sculls at the Sydney 2000 Games, but tragedy struck when his partner Michelangelo Crispin contracted a colon virus and was hospitalised for a month before the Games. Italian selectors tried different combinations before Elia Luini was selected to compete in Sydney. Pettinari and Luini were considered favourites

Poland's pair of Tomasz Kucharski and Robert Sycz ignored the expectation of an Italian victory, however, and in a masterful display led from start to finish. The Italians were second and France's Pascal Tournon and Thibaud Chapelle were third.

Women's Quadruple Sculls

Germany has won every gold medal for this event since it was introduced into the Olympic program in Seoul in 1988. Although the crew has changed numerous times since then, coach Jutta Lau, a two-time Olympic gold medallist and



Rowing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



7. A local family of ducks is unfazed by the Olympic competition unfolding on Penrith Lakes

8. British fans and Union Jacks were abundant as retiring national hero Steve Redgrave and his team rowed past the excited spectators

Rowing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



9. Italy's Alessio Sartori acknowledges the crowd after his team won the men's quadruple sculls in an impressive display of their power

10. The Australian coxless fours team in action during the qualifying round. In the final, the local favourite was narrowly defeated by France, taking silver after Great Britain

11. Rowing teams practise on Penrith Lakes during the early hours of the day

10



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9



ALEXANDER ZEMLIANCHENKO/AP PHOTO

three-time world champion, has remained. The competition to stay in the German women's boat is merciless. In winter and spring, qualifying races are held in small boats. "And nothing but performance counts," said Lau about her stringent selection methods.

In Sydney it was no different. With a commanding display of rowing, the German team dominated the race and their opposition, leading from start to finish. Lau believes the best possible mix for a quad is veteran routine and determination paired with youthful vigour and grit. World champions Manja and Kerstin Kowalski, Meike Evers and Manuela Lutze justified a German sports magazine's claim that "gold for the women's quad scull [is] a law of nature".

The German 'Show Boat' defeated Great Britain's team of Guin and Miriam Batten, Gillian Lindsay and Katherine Grainger. The Russian Federation team was awarded bronze, finishing one-hundredth of a second away from the silver medallists.

Men's Quadruple Sculls

Again Germany has a history of dominating this event. German crews have won Olympic gold for the quadruple sculls at five of the last six Games and they were the reigning world and Olympic champions. Despite this imposing record they had suffered losses in the lead up to Sydney and their form was in question. Making the most of this opportunity, the Italian team of Agostino Abbagnale, Alessio Sartori, Rossano Galtarossa and Simone Raineri seized gold over the Netherlands, with Germany third and Australia fourth.

The Eights

The finale of the Olympic rowing program was the battle of the eights – both men's and women's. Their displays of power and speed excited the capacity crowd at the Sydney International Regatta Centre.

Women's Eights

In Atlanta 1996, the Romanian crew won the women's gold. They repeated their wins in the world championships of 1997, 1998 and 1999. Their victory in Sydney was especially significant as it earned Elisabeta Lipa a fourth gold medal. The Netherlands took the silver and Canada bronze.

Men's Eights

By starting fast and staying in front, Great Britain swept to gold in the men's eight, for the first time since 1912. Host nation Australia had expected to win but after a sluggish start, was unable to catch the British, who won an exciting race by 0.80 seconds. Second was little consolation for the Australian team, even though it matched the previous best by an Australian eight at the 1968 Mexico Games.

They had finished just behind Great Britain at the Lucerne world cup two months earlier and fancied their chances after a strong heat and with a home crowd urging them on. Croatia finished third and Italy fourth. Reigning world champion USA

11



ANDY CLARK/REUTERS

was fifth. Luka Grubor, number five in the British boat, summed it up as "a heroic effort on the day".

The fact that an unprecedented 26 nations qualified for the Sydney 2000 Olympic rowing finals indicated a depth of talent across a broad spectrum of competing countries. But it was the European countries that dominated the winners' podium. They won 32 medals, including all but one of the gold medals on offer. That went to New Zealand's Rob Waddell in the men's single sculls.

The host nation, Australia, had boats in ten of the 14 finals which ensured capacity crowds. With five medals Australia finished second on the medal count. However, unlike Atlanta four years earlier, there were no golds and it was considered a disappointing result.

Germany finished on top of the count with six medals, including two gold. Italy won four, with one gold. Romania joined France, the USA, Great Britain and the Netherlands with a tally of three each. All of the Romanian medals were gold, with two for France and Great Britain. The USA and the Netherlands had to be content with minor medals.

For most of the Olympic rowing competition, capacity crowds of up to 27 000 flocked to the shores of the Sydney International Regatta Centre each day.



12

Rowing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



GRAHAM CROUCH/NEWS LTD

12. Fans pay tribute to the Australian men's eights, who won the silver medal behind the British team

13. The Romanian women's eights defended their Atlanta gold medal

14. Spectators cheer for Great Britain, Australia and Croatia during the medal ceremony for the men's eights

The gorgeously warm, sunny weather at a world-class venue with thrilling competition provided a wonderful Olympic experience for both diehard rowing fanatics and those just keen to experience the Sydney Games.

With seating for 17 000 in the grandstand and pavilion, the other 10 000 spectators made themselves comfortable on picnic rugs on the grass-covered banks along the course.

It was an occasion that many had been anticipating for months, even years. Painted-faced fans of many nations flaunted their patriotism – cheering, embracing, waving flags – while savouring their Olympic experience.



13

JAMIE SQUIRE/ALLSPORT



14

JAMIE SQUIRE/ALLSPORT





SAILING

Sydney Harbour, Rushcutters Bay
17–30 September 2000

It is hard to imagine a more beautiful setting for sailing than Sydney Harbour. The skyline features a wealth of variety; native flora, Taronga Park Zoo, the imposing cityscape and, of course, the majestic Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge. Numerous small beaches fringe the courses. Apart from the striking aesthetics, Sydney Harbour also presented challenging conditions for sailing.

From the many vantage points around the harbour, spectators could obtain first class views of the competition for no charge, and they took advantage of the opportunity in large numbers. Others viewed the sailing more closely from chartered ferries. The 2000 Olympic Games was the first instance of a working port being used for the Olympic regatta. That was not the only new development. Prior to these Games, sailing had been referred to as yachting in its long Olympic involvement.

Olympic sailing involves 'one design' classes, that is, all boats competing in an event are built from the same design. The Sydney competition involved over 404 sailors and 273 boats, from 69 nations, in 11 events and nine classes of boat.

Sailors can have great longevity as athletes. The oldest competitor in the sailing at Sydney was Eduardo Farre from Argentina, who was 57 years of age. Participants included 46 medallists from earlier Olympic Games, stretching back to Montreal in 1976.

There were separate men's and women's events for the 470 dinghy and the Mistral sailboard. Men competed in the Finn single-handed dinghy, women in the Europe single-handed dinghy.

The Laser single-handed dinghy, the 49er two-handed dinghy, the Tornado two-handed catamaran, the Star two-handed keelboat and the Soling three-handed keelboat were all open events. The 49er dinghy was making its Olympic Games debut.

Each class had 11 fleet races, except for the 49er, which raced 16 times. The Soling class began with fleet races, then had round-robin match races and medal match-races. Two races were scheduled per competition day, except for the 49er, which had three races per competition day.

Competitors launched from the Sailing Marina, normally home to the famous Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, at Rushcutters Bay in Sydney's eastern suburbs, a short distance from the city centre. This proximity was a boon to the Olympic sailors, who at most Games have competed far away from the other events, often having to live in their own Olympic Village.

Six courses (A–F) were set; A–D inside Sydney Harbour, E–F outside Sydney Heads in the Tasman Sea. Up to five courses were in operation on any day of competition. All courses were within 30 minutes sailing time of the Sailing Marina.

Sailing requires a blend of unique skills so subtle that it is impossible to identify and quantify them all. While an enormous body of nautical knowledge and lore exists, there are the intangible instincts, intuition and hunches that defy systematic description, but which consistently separate the great sailors from the good ones.

Over the duration of the Olympic regatta, the world's best sailors' fortunes ebbed and flowed like the massive quantities of water that surged in and out of the famous Sydney Heads, the 'washing machine' that could upset the best-calculated race plans with its fickle currents and winds. In no other Olympic Summer Games sport does the weather have such an impact.

There were sunny days and others thick with cloud. More importantly, there were days when the wind encouraged fast sailing and days when it refused to blow, forcing the racing to be postponed or suspended. But overall the conditions were ideal for hard, competitive sailing. And the fierceness of the contest and evenness of the fields were demonstrated by the closeness of the results. Most of the medals were not decided until the last race.

Sailing

Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Brazil leads the field in men's 470 races on Sydney Harbour
2. Roman Hagara and Hans Peter Steinacher of Austria celebrate their gold medal in the open Tornado fleet race
3. Hagara and Steinacher lead the Tornado catamaran race. The pair performed consistently strong, securing their gold medal with two races to spare



2

NICK WILSON/SPORT



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Tornado

Austria's pair, Roman Hagara and Hans Peter Steinacher, secured the first gold medal of the regatta in the Tornado catamaran class, establishing an unassailable lead after the ninth race. By winning five of the races and not finishing lower than fourth in any other, they had the luxury of sitting out the final two races. Australia's Darren Bundock and John Forbes were the silver medallists and had the satisfaction of

winning the first and last races. German world champions Roland Gaebler and Rene Schwall clinched the bronze medal in the final race.

Women's Mistral

This class provided the closest result of the regatta. In the final race, in 15 knot winds, Italy's Alessandra Sensini and Amelie Lux of Germany duelled to the finish line, with Sensini prevailing by just seven seconds. This left the two equal on points, but on a count-back Sensini was awarded the gold medal, Italy's first in sailing since 1952. Former gold medallist Barbara Kendall of New Zealand won the bronze.

Men's Mistral

The final stages of the men's Mistral sailboard class were almost as exciting. With two races remaining, Argentina's Carlos Espinola had established a ten-point lead over Austria's Christoph Sieber. Sieber finished fifth and seventh in the final two races, enabling him to discard two earlier poor performances, and although Espinola came third in the final race, it was not enough to maintain his lead over Sieber. He won silver and Aaron McIntosh of New Zealand claimed the bronze.

Europe

The Europe dinghy class was settled in exciting circumstances, by the smallest of margins, in the final race. Shirley Robertson of Great Britain had the lead going into the penultimate race, but this was cut back when Margriet Matthyse of the Netherlands won that race. Robertson retained a four-point lead entering the last race, but Matthyse sailed brilliantly,

4. A fleet of Mistrals training in perfect conditions on Sydney Harbour

5. Italy's Alessandra Sensini, 1996 bronze medallist, pops a bottle of champagne after a tight victory in the women's Mistral race

6. Christoph Sieber of Austria is joined by fellow competitors to celebrate his gold medal and the end of the men's Mistral races



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NICK WILSON/ALLSPORT

5

sensing a critical wind shift, to win again. Robertson held on to finish third and repel Matthyse's challenge by a mere two points, so becoming Great Britain's first individual women's sailing medallist. Serena Amato of Argentina finished with the bronze medal.

Women's 470

Australia had a brilliant double victory in the 470 dinghy class. Leaders Jenny Armstrong and Belinda Stowell clinched the women's gold medal in style, winning the final race. JJ Isler and Pease Glaser of the USA finished sixth in the final race to edge out the Ukrainian pair of Ruslana Taran and Olena Pakholchuk and take the silver medal by a single point. For Taran and Pakholchuk it was their second consecutive Olympic bronze medal.

Men's 470

In the men's 470 class, Australia's reigning world champions Tom King and Mark Turnbull finished second in the final race, enough to win gold over the race winners, Paul Foerster and Bob Merrick of the USA. Javier Conte and Juan de la Fuente of Argentina were the bronze medallists. Both Australian 470 class teams paid homage to their coach, Ukrainian Victor Kovalenko. The last time Australia had won Olympic Games sailing gold medals was in Munich in 1972.

Laser

Briton Ben Ainslie reversed the result of the 1996 Olympic Games by winning the Laser single-handed dinghy class gold medal and relegating Brazil's Robert Scheidt to second place. The result had to be formally settled by the international jury,



7

MARK DADSWELL/SPORT

which dismissed the final race protest made by Scheidt against Ainslie and, in fact, upheld Ainslie's counter-protest and disqualified Scheidt. Scheidt employed a lovely turn of phrase in his congratulatory note to Ainslie, saying he looked forward to four more years of 'chasing' him on the water. Australia's Michael Blackburn was the bronze medallist.

49er

In the 49er two-handed dinghy class, Finland's Thomas Johanson and Jyrki Jarvi clinched the gold medal in the penultimate race. The final race featured a fierce duel for the silver medal between Britons Ian Barker and Simon Hiscocks,



9

MARK DADSWELL/SPORT



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7. Great Britain's Ben Ainslie holds up his provisional gold medal. It took a jury four hours to decide over protests launched after the race, but the Briton kept his gold medal
8. Accredited photographers were close to the action on specially chartered vessels
9. Belinda Stowell and Jenny Armstrong won Australia's first sailing gold since 1972. Hundreds of Australian fans cheered them on from the foreshores of Sydney Harbour and a ferry held its position for 15 minutes so passengers could witness the spectacle

Sailing
Volume Two
Chapter Five



10



JULIAN ANDREWS/FAIRFAX

and brothers Jonathon and Charlie McKee of the USA. The McKees, needing to finish at least six places ahead of the British pair, sailed aggressively to win the race. Barker and Hiscocks shadowed them around the course and finished third, so securing the silver medal.

Star

All medals in the Star double-handed keelboat class were decided in the last race and in dramatic circumstances. Leaders Torben Grael and Marcelo Ferreira of Brazil, who

were trying to repeat their gold medal triumph of the 1996 Olympic Games, were disqualified for starting the race on the course side. They ended up with the bronze medal. Their disqualification opened the door for the US crew of Mark Reynolds and Magnus Liljedahl. They also had problems, breaking at the start, but recovered to reach second place at the first windward mark and maintained this position to the end, securing the gold medal. Britons Ian Walker and Mark Covell finished third in the race, placing second overall.

Finn

Iain Percy of Great Britain secured the gold medal in the Finn single-handed dinghy class in the penultimate race and did not compete in the last. Percy was a model of consistency, winning three races and never finishing lower than ninth over the first nine races. The silver and bronze medals were decided in the final race, Italy's Luca Devoti finishing sixth and holding off 1999 world champion Fredrik Loof of Sweden for the silver medal.

Soling

The climax to the regatta was the medal sail-offs for the Soling three-handed keelboat class, held against the backdrop of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Sydney Opera House, in front of a huge crowd watching from the foreshore. Soling is considered to be the senior Olympic class and its Olympic competitions have attracted some of the world's most outstanding helmsmen. It is the only class that includes match races, tactical duels in which rules are all-important. After preliminary fleet racing for seedings the sailors competed in a match-racing round robin. The top boats from this then advanced to another round of match racing, with the leading boats progressing to the finals.

11



MIKE HEWITT/SPORT

10. The 49er fleet races past Bradleys Head. Billed as the stars of the sailing competition, the 49ers colourful sails attracted many spectators

11. Iain Percy of Great Britain on his way to gold in the men's Finn class to take Britain's third gold in the Sydney sailing competition

12



MARK DAOSWELL/ALLSPORT

In the gold medal sail-off, Danish skipper Jesper Bank defeated two-time gold medallist Jochen Schuemann of Germany 4–3 in a tense and exciting match race. Schuemann was a casualty of infringements, being forced to make penalty turns in the races he lost. In the bronze medal sail-off, Norway's Herman Horn Johannessen defeated Roy Heiner of the Netherlands 3–1.

The regatta came to a close with the second and final medal ceremony on 30 September. Magnificently staged at the Sydney Opera House, it was watched by an estimated 10 000 cheering spectators, the largest crowd to ever witness an Olympic Games sailing medal ceremony.

By any and all measures the regatta had been a resounding success. The weather had been friendly, if not exactly benign. The conditions had been fair yet challenging. The skills on display had been as sublime as the harbour. Sailing can be a fairly solitary sport, but in Sydney, huge crowds had watched the competition in a carnival atmosphere.

The sailors of Great Britain, perhaps inspired by their First Fleet countrymen who sailed into these same waters in 1788, performed best with three gold and two silver medals. Host nation Australia finished with two gold, one silver and one bronze medal and Austria secured two gold medals. The true measure of the regatta, however, was the evenness of the competition. The 11 gold medals on offer were shared among seven countries. In all, the 33 medals were distributed among 15 nations.

Considering the hundreds of competitors, the numerous races and the relative solitude of sailing compared to some other sports, it is difficult to isolate a few enduring, individual images. Although engaged in fierce competition and expending enormous energy, sailors often appear to be immobile, even sedentary! Perhaps the most unforgettable single image is that desperate duel between Alessandra Sensini and Amelie Lux in the final race of the women's Mistral, the result ironically determined by the officials' pencils as they calculated the count-back. But overall it is the picture of an armada of both white and colourful sails against a predominantly blue sky, surrounded by an almost infinite variety of hues – the deep blue of the harbour, yellow sand, green foliage, multi-coloured spectator craft, the Sydney cityscape and the gleaming white sails of the Sydney Opera House, all mirroring the sleek vessels on the water.

Once the racing was over the harbour reverted to its familiar pre-Games role. The ferries to and from Manly resumed their regular routes, the working boats once again became prominent and the recreational sailors took over the water on the weekends. The unique venue again became a centre for work and play in the heart of Sydney.

Sailing

Volume Two
Chapter Five



12. German fans besieged the viewing areas at the Opera House

13. Henrik Blakskjaer, Jesper Bank and Thomas Jacobsen of Denmark share a beer after snatching the gold in the open Soling from the German sailors

14. Veterans Jochen Schuemann of Germany and Jesper Bank of Denmark battle for the gold in the open Soling final



13

NICK WILSON/ALLSPORT



14

NICK WILSON/ALLSPORT





SHOOTING

**Sydney International Shooting Centre, Cecil Park
16–23 September 2000**

Although one of the original sports of the modern Olympic Games, there is nothing old-fashioned about shooting. It has advanced from the days of paper targets and manual scoring to the electronic targets and computerised scoring systems used for the 2000 Olympic Games. The Cecil Park complex, set in native bush and grassland, is one of the finest shooting venues in the world. It boasted state-of-the-art technological support and excellent facilities for competitors and spectators.

Shooting is such a precise sport that the slightest error, loss of concentration or equipment failure can prove to be disastrous. How shooters react to peripheral factors such as the wind, the light and spectators often decides who wins or loses. The performances of Australian shooters Michael Diamond, trap and Russell Mark, double trap clearly demonstrated this. Russell Mark relaxed too early and lost, after leading by three points, over the last ten targets. Michael Diamond, defending Olympic champion, performed perfectly under immense pressure from the sell-out audience and the whole nation, the presence of the Australian Prime Minister and his own high expectations. He harnessed all his reserves and blitzed the field in the men's trap competition, winning by five targets.

Women's 10 m Air Rifle

Keeping with tradition, the first medal at the Sydney Olympic Games was awarded **in the** women's 10 m air rifle event. Outsider Nancy Johnson of the USA narrowly defeated Korea's Kang Cho-Hyun with the final shot of the competition by 0.2 of a point, 497.7 to 497.5. Gao Jing of China was a mere 0.3 behind Kang with 497.2. Kang had only been shooting for just over a year and had been entered into the Olympic Games on the recommendation of the Korean Pistol Shooting Association.

Men's 10 m Air Pistol

The second final held on Day 1 was the men's 10 m air pistol. Pre-Games favourite Franck Dumoulin of France, and Wang Yifu from China, Barcelona gold medallist, traded Olympic records before Dumoulin beat Wang by two clear points with an Olympic record score of 688.9. Igor Basinsky of Belarus, who had scored a maximum 100 in the first round, lost poise in the final series and had to settle for the bronze.

Women's 10 m Air Pistol

Two finals were decided on Day 2 and in both Australians were able to delight the enthusiastic audience. In the women's 10 m air pistol China's shooter Tao Luna was never challenged

and won the gold from Jasna Sekaric of Yugoslavia. In an exciting three-way battle Australia's Annemarie Forder finally overcame challenges from the Russian Federation's Svetlana Smirnova and Michiko Fukushima of Japan to win the bronze with an outstanding final shot that scored 10.5 points.

Men's Single Trap

A capacity crowd at the clay target arena savoured Michael Diamond's second consecutive Olympic gold medal win for Australia in the men's trap. The overwhelming support and constant chanting from the audience and the hot and blustery conditions combined to make shooting very difficult. But Diamond demonstrated his supremacy in the event by shooting a perfect 25 in the final to win with 147. Great Britain's Ian Peel won silver with 142 and Italy's Giovanni Pellielo bronze with 140 points.

Men's 10 m Air Rifle

Despite the difficult conditions, the Cecil Park range produced plenty of record breaking performances on the third day of competition. Cai Yalin of China set a new Olympic record with a score of 696.4 points, winning gold in the men's 10 m

Shooting
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Michael Diamond of Australia takes aim during the men's trap qualification round
2. Australia's Prime Minister, John Howard, congratulates Diamond
3. Most shooting sessions were sold out and the crowds were so enthusiastic that their cheers at times distracted the athletes



HAMISH BLAIR/ALLSPORT



3

MIKE HEWITT/ALLSPORT

Shooting
Volume Two
Chapter Five



4. Michel Ansermet of Switzerland shoots to win silver in the men's 25 m rapid fire pistol competition

5. Great Britain's Richard Faulds receives a hug from his wife after snatching the gold in the men's double-trap from Australia's Russell Mark in a tense shoot-off

6. Gold medallist Pia Hansen of Sweden (centre) is joined on the dais by fellow medallists in the women's double trap competition, Deborah Gelisio of Italy (left) and Kimberly Rhode of the USA

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6



air rifle. The Russian Federation's Artem Khadjibekov, and his compatriot Evgueni Aleinikov, won the silver and bronze medals respectively.

Women's Single Trap

Increasing women's representation in Olympic sport continued in the women's trap and skeet events, contested for the first time in Sydney. In windy conditions Lithuania's Daina Gudzineviciute won the trap event from the pre-match favourite Delphine Racinet of France. Racinet shot poorly in the qualification round and even her 25 in the final could not match Gudzineviciute, who beat her by a single point. Gao E. of China, a further two points back, won the bronze.

Women's Skeet

Zemfira Meftakhetdinova of Azerbaijan shot magnificently and scored 98 to win the women's skeet event. The home crowd again tried to roar home their favourite, Tash Lonsdale. However, Lonsdale missed a bronze in the shoot-out against Diana Igaly of Hungary. Home-town pressure also seemed to affect Australian women's champion Deserie Wakefield-Baynes, who failed to fulfil her dream of two golds in the shotgun events. She missed qualifying for both the trap and skeet finals.

Men's 50 m Pistol

Bulgaria's Tanyu Kiriakov won the blue ribbon event – the 50 m pistol – with 666 points. Igor Basinsky of Belarus won silver from the Czech Republic's Martin Tenk. Wang Yifu of China, and his arch-rival Roberto di Donna of Italy, failed to live up to their pre-competition favouritism.

Women's Double Trap

The second final on Day 4, the women's double trap, also provided shooting aficionados with a shock. Three-times world champion and gold medal favourite, Italy's superstar Deborah Gelisio, could not make up a five-point gap going



into the final and was beaten for gold by outsider Pia Hansen of Sweden. Hansen also defeated Atlanta champion Kimberly Rhode of the USA, who took bronze a further five points away. This was an amazing result, as Pia Hansen only qualified for Sydney 2000 by virtue of a wildcard entry.

Men's Double Trap

A massive audience attended the fifth day of competition. Most were there for what was supposed to be the second golden chapter for Australia's men's trap shooters. It was far from the best day for shooting, windy and hot, with a very real threat that the smoke from a local bushfire would be blown over Cecil Park. However, another kind of gloom fell over the Australian crowd. After the euphoria that greeted Michael Diamond's win in the single trap, Russell Mark played his part for all but the final seconds of the double trap. Leading by two clear shots, he dropped a double on the 23rd shot. This forced a shoot-off for the gold with Briton Richard Faulds, who had hung on tenaciously behind a seemingly unbeatable Mark.

The drama continued in the shoot-off as both missed one of their first pair, but Faulds was not so generous after Mark missed a second target. Faulds hit both his targets to win the gold. Fehaid Al Deehani of Kuwait won bronze after an excellent effort which left him just one shot behind in the final round. Russell Mark's loss was the focus for the local media but it was Richard Fauld's patience and poise as well as his excellent final pair that mattered.

On this day the polar extremes of sporting emotion had been very much in evidence at Cecil Park. For Richard Faulds it was ecstasy, for Russell Mark and his Australian followers it was agony. Rapturous applause and intense support can be dysfunctional in precision events such as shooting and archery. They can be distracting and can even precipitate a state of over-arousal. During this final, the collective expectation and desire for gold poured out of the steep scaffold stands and perhaps that worked against the Australian.

Women's 50 m Rifle Three Positions

There was a surprising outcome to the women's 50 m rifle three positions event. Both world champion Sonja Pfeilschifter of Germany and dual World Cup medal winner Tatiana Goldobina of the Russian Federation failed to overhaul surprise winner Renata Mauer-Rozanska of Poland. The German shooter fell apart in the final rounds and dropped down to fourth with Maria Feklistova of the Russian Federation moving up to take the bronze.



Men's 50 m Rifle Prone

In the men's 50 m rifle prone Jonas Edman of Sweden and Torben Grimmel of Denmark upset more favoured shooters to take gold and silver respectively. Edman led throughout the qualification round while Grimmel entered the final in equal third place, and neither was challenged. Four shooters were tied for the bronze with one shot remaining but Sergei Martynov of Belarus summoned all his World Cup experience and took the bronze by half a point.

Men's 25 m Rapid Fire Pistol

Ralf Schumann of Germany, regarded by many as the one of the most successful shooters in history, came to Sydney wanting a medal, "regardless of which colour", but all believed he was to win his third consecutive gold in the 25 m rapid fire pistol event. However, the master was penalised two points in the first round and was unable to recover, eventually coming fifth. The Russian Federation's Serguei Alifirenko, so long the bridesmaid to Schumann, won the gold with 687.6. Switzerland's Michel Ansermet, silver and Romania's Lulian Raicea, bronze had shared the lead with Alifirenko on 587 at the end of the qualifying stage.

Women's 25 m Pistol

The penultimate day of the Sydney 2000 Games shooting competition saw two medals decided, two Olympic records broken and a dramatic turnaround from the qualification round to the final in the women's 25 m pistol event. Tao Luna from China led after the qualification round, breaking the Olympic record with a score of 590. Tao went into the final ahead of Maria Grozdeva of Bulgaria and veteran shooter Lolita Evglevskaya of Belarus. In an enthralling final Grozdeva took the lead with her seventh shot and despite Tao's gallant attempt to shoot two 10.7 scores with her final shots, Grozdeva held on for gold. Evglevskaya, scoring 103 in the final, took the bronze.

Men's 10 m Running Target

Chinese shooters excelled in the men's 10 m running target event. Yang Ling won the final, Niu Zhiyuan the bronze, with Oleg Moldovan splitting the two Chinese medal winners. He became the Republic of Moldova's first Olympic shooting medallist and nearly won that country's first gold, missing by a mere 0.1 of a point. Yang performed excellently and rose to the challenge presented by some formidable adversaries.

Men's 50 m Rifle Three Positions

The final day of Olympic shooting traditionally sees the marathon of shooting events decided: the men's 50 m rifle three positions event. This physically and mentally exhausting event is notoriously difficult to predict and at Sydney 2000 none of the favoured shooters won medals. It took an Olympic record (1275.1) from Rajmond Debevec of Slovenia to win the gold from Finland's Juha Hirvi while Norway's Harald Stenvaag won the bronze. This win represented a remarkable effort by Debevec, who was competing in his fifth Olympic Games.

Men's Skeet

There was another outstanding effort on the last day. Ukraine's Mykola Milchev in the men's skeet scored a perfect 150 to win gold from Petr Malek of the Czech Republic by two targets. The US's James Graves took bronze, a further shot behind.

Throughout the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, shooters at Cecil Park displayed the highest levels of sportsmanship. The camaraderie amongst them was exceptional, despite agonisingly close finishes and the obvious intense competition for sport's highest award, an Olympic medal. Russell Mark called for the partisan crowd to be quiet during his competitors' turns and even expressed his dismay at his supporters' cheering of his opponents' misses.

The Sydney 2000 shooting competition was logistically successful and extremely enjoyable; naturally this was largely due to the athletes, coaches and officials, ably assisted by dedicated volunteers. Their efforts and their enthusiasm will be one of the enduring memories of the 2000 Olympic Games.



Shooting
Volume Two
Chapter Five



8
DARREN ENGLAND/ALLSPORT



9
JAMIE SQUIRE/ALLSPORT

7. James Graves, competing in his third Olympic Games, is happy about his bronze medal in the men's skeet competition

8. Renata Mauer-Rozanska of Poland, bronze medallist in Atlanta, shoots for a gold in the women's 50 m rifle three position competition

9. Juha Hirvi of Finland celebrates his silver medal in the men's 50 m rifle three position

10. China's Yang Ling is another Atlanta gold medallist who successfully defended his Olympic title. Yang won the men's 10 m running target final by a tenth of a point

10

DARREN ENGLAND/ALLSPORT





SOFTBALL

Aquilina Reserve, Blacktown
17–26 September 2000

It is 21 September 2000, the fifth day of softball competition at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. A large crowd of 9209 has squeezed into a small venue. The Softball Centre at Aquilina Reserve, Blacktown, located in western Sydney, is a purpose-built Games venue, designed to allow the spectators to be close to the action. And action was here to be enjoyed.

The powerful US team, defending gold medallists from the 1996 Atlanta Games, are playing Australia, the defending Olympic bronze medallists. For the third time in three consecutive games, the USA is forced into extra innings. With the game still tied 0–0 after nine innings, the international tiebreaker is invoked and a runner is placed on second base as each team takes its turn at bat.

The game remains scoreless until the top of the 13th inning, when the USA takes the lead as Christie Ambrosi singles down the third-base line, scoring their tiebreak runner, Michele Smith. Australia has one final chance to respond. America's pitcher, the legendary Lisa Fernandez, is already sitting on an Olympic record – 25 strikeouts for the game. With the tiebreak runner placed on second, the first two Australian batters ground out.

Just one out from defeat, Australia's left fielder, Peta Edebone, strides to the plate. Edebone has a reputation for being a threat every time she comes to bat. Before the Games she was quoted as saying, "I don't think too much when I am at bat. The best thing for me to do is to reach the box with a blank and open mind, get the signal from the coach and just do it. On any given day I know I can hit against the world's best pitchers. Pitchers are all tough competitors – they are out there to beat you and I'm out there to beat them."

Fernandez unleashes one of her 100 kph bombs, a pitch she intends to keep low, but it lifts. Edebone, seeing the ball all the way, swings smoothly and there is never any doubt – the ball sails over the left-field fence. Australia wins 2–1.

One sportswriter described this American defeat as "a major fright, a wake-up call of titanic proportions". The US team, boasting a 110-game winning streak when they arrived in Sydney, had just suffered their third successive loss in the preliminary round of the Olympic softball tournament. After defeating Canada 6–0 and Cuba 3–0 on the first two days of competition, the USA lost 1–2 to Japan in 11 innings, then were shut out by China 0–2 in 14 innings before losing 1–2 to Australia.

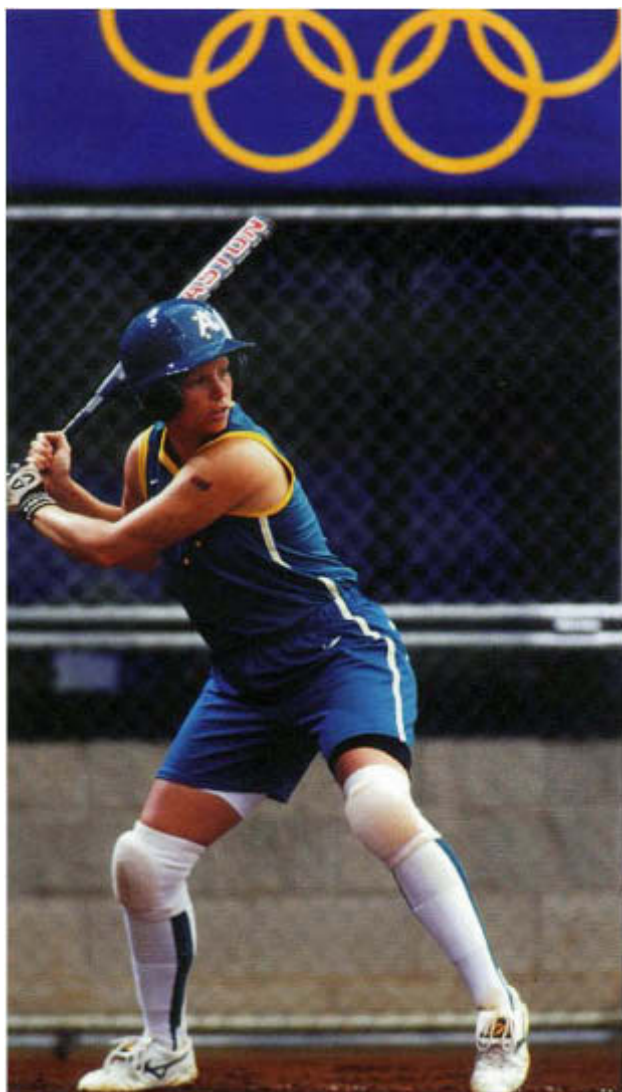
The Americans looked shell-shocked in the post-game press conference. Accustomed to batting around 300, the US team

was hitting just over 200 after the first four days of the tournament. "We're in a tough situation," admitted American head coach, Ralph Raymond. "So far, we're just not hitting the ball. The question now is how well do we deal with failure and how do we come back from it." Fernandez, arguably the best softball player in the world, said, "I pitched a good game today – all except that last pitch. Our team has a challenge now and it is the biggest challenge I've had in my career. We will respond."

The Competition

Softball was invented in the USA in 1887 at the Farragut Boat Club in Chicago. It held its first world championship in Melbourne in 1965, but did not enter the Olympic program until the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. The USA, China and Australia won gold, silver and bronze respectively in Atlanta, with Japan finishing fourth. In the round-robin matches at those Games, Australia had defeated the USA 2–1 on a two-run homer by Jo Brown in the bottom of the tenth inning. Peta Edebone's 13th inning homer at the 2000 Games was so eerily reminiscent of 1996 that the Americans wondered aloud if they were the victims of some mysterious 'voodoo' after their third consecutive loss in Sydney.

Eight teams qualified for the Sydney 2000 Olympic softball tournament. Australia, the Olympic host nation, qualified automatically. Then the top four teams from the 1998 Women's



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Softball

Volume Two
Chapter Five



SIMON DALLINGERNEWS LTD

1. Dot Richardson of the USA celebrates an out at base during a preliminary clash against China.
2. The Australian team is jubilant after Peta Edebone's winning homerun in the 13th inning which led to the defeat of the favoured US team in a preliminary match
3. Olympic homerun record holder Peta Edebone in the batter's box against China

Softball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



4. A Japanese fan leads the chant during the preliminary round game between Japan and Australia

5. China's Zhang Yanqing delivers a powerful pitch during their preliminary round clash against Japan

6. Japan's Reika Utsugi tags Australia's Natalie Ward as she slides into base during the semifinal between Australia and Japan



ANDY LYONS/SPORT



SAMI MIRCOVIC/REUTERS



JACKI AMES/SPORT THE LIBRARY

World Championships in Japan, excluding the Olympic host team qualified. These were Canada, China, Japan and the USA. The other three entrants were determined by qualification tournaments for Europe/Africa (Italy), Pan American Region (Cuba) and Asia/Oceania (New Zealand).

The tournament was conducted as a round-robin competition, with each team playing seven preliminary games. The top four teams from the preliminary round, Japan, Australia, China and the USA qualified for the finals, which used the Page System, two semifinals, one preliminary final and one grand final. The winner of the major second semifinal and the winner of the preliminary final met in the grand final, with the winner receiving the gold medal and the loser taking the silver.

Softball was the only sport to use the Page System at the 2000 Olympic Games. The USA, with three losses in the round robin, had to complete a three-game sweep in the play-offs in order to win the gold medal. China was their first opponent in this do-or-die challenge. With the men of the US baseball team in the stands cheering them on, the Americans defeated China 3-0 in ten innings in the minor first semifinal to set the stage for one of the great comebacks of the Sydney 2000 Games.

The scores were locked at 0-0 until the bottom of the tenth, when US catcher Stacey Nuveman hit the ball over the left-field fence, scoring Jennifer Brundage and Sheila Douty, who were on base. Until Nuveman's home run there was little to separate the two teams. China picked up five hits for the game, the USA had four, and China's Zhang Yanqing pitched all ten innings, recording eight strikeouts. Michele Smith pitched eight innings for the USA before Christa Williams came to the mound and used her 110 kph fastball to shut down the Chinese batters.

Japan defeated Australia 1-0 in the major second semifinal after Reika Utsugi lifted a pitch from Tanya Harding over the left-field fence. This win advanced an undefeated Japan directly to the gold medal game. Australia and the USA then met in the preliminary final to determine who would play Japan for the gold medal. The loser of the USA vs Australia game would receive the bronze.

With both teams scoreless going into the bottom of the fifth inning, America's Dr Dot Richardson, an orthopaedic physician, hit a single to centre field, scoring Jennifer McFalls who was pinch-running for Stacey Nuveman. Neither the vocal, sell-out home crowd nor the strong pitching of Kelly Hardie was enough to get Australia back into the game and the host team had to settle for the bronze medal, equalling its performance in Atlanta.

As the undefeated form team of the tournament, Japan had to be favoured for the gold medal. Under head coach Taeko Fushimi, the Japanese players demonstrated skill, patience, discipline and a bubbling enthusiasm throughout the Olympic tournament. Finishing just out of the medals in Atlanta, Japan came back to win a bronze medal at the 1998 world championships and had clearly gone from strength to strength on their way to the Sydney 2000 Games.

Playing the gold medal game in damp conditions between rain showers, Japan scored first when Reika Utsugi drilled a home run to open the fourth inning. The USA responded in the bottom of the fifth when Michele Smith was hit by a pitch, then moved to second on a ground-out from Sheila Douty and scored on a Nuveman shot to right-centre field. Nuveman's single was the only US hit in the game. Japan's starting pitcher, Mariko Masubuchi, retired the first 11 batters she faced but after the USA scored in the fifth, she was relieved by Juri Takayama. Japan advanced runners to third in the second and fifth innings but could not bring them home. Like so many other games in this tournament, the score was locked (1-1) at the end of the regulation seven innings.

In the bottom of the eighth, Nuveman drew a walk, then moved into scoring position when Dot Richardson also walked. Laura Berg then drove a shot to deep left-field where the fielder, Shiori Koseki, fell backward, spilling the ball and allowing Jennifer McFalls, who was pinch-running for Nuveman, to score from second. "As I saw her [Koseki] fall, I knew we had it," said Nuveman, "I grabbed Lisa [Fernandez] and yelled 'We've won! We've won!'" Fernandez pitched three hits, walked two and struck out eight to record the win.

Its second place finish marked Japan's first ever Olympic medal in softball but, with an overall tournament record of



7

Softball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



ANDY LYONS/ALLSPORT

8-1, the team must have left Sydney somewhat disappointed to lose its final game to the USA, which had an overall tournament record of 6-3.

Peta Edebone of Australia and Crystl Bustos of the USA led the individual statistics in home runs with four and three respectively. The top three batters were Yan Fang of China with an average of .400, Jennifer Brundage of the USA with .391 and Rhonda Hira of New Zealand with .375. Among the pitchers, the strikeout leaders were Zhang Yanqing of China, Lisa Fernandez of the USA, Susan Bugliarello of Italy and Tanya Harding of Australia.

In only its second appearance, at an Olympic Games, softball again proved to be a worthy member of the Olympic Family. The precision and speed of the game, combined with the sheer athleticism of the competitors and the tightly fought matches, made it one of the most exciting and heavily supported sports at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.



9

EZRA SHAW /ALLSPORT



8

ANDY LYONS/ALLSPORT

7. US pitcher Lisa Fernandez just before unleashing one of her characteristically fast balls during the final against Japan.

8. Dejection for Emi Naito after team-mate Shiori Koseki dropped the ball to give the USA the winning gold medal run

9. Lisa Fernandez is congratulated by Reika Utsugi of Japan after the USA's eight-inning, 2-1 victory

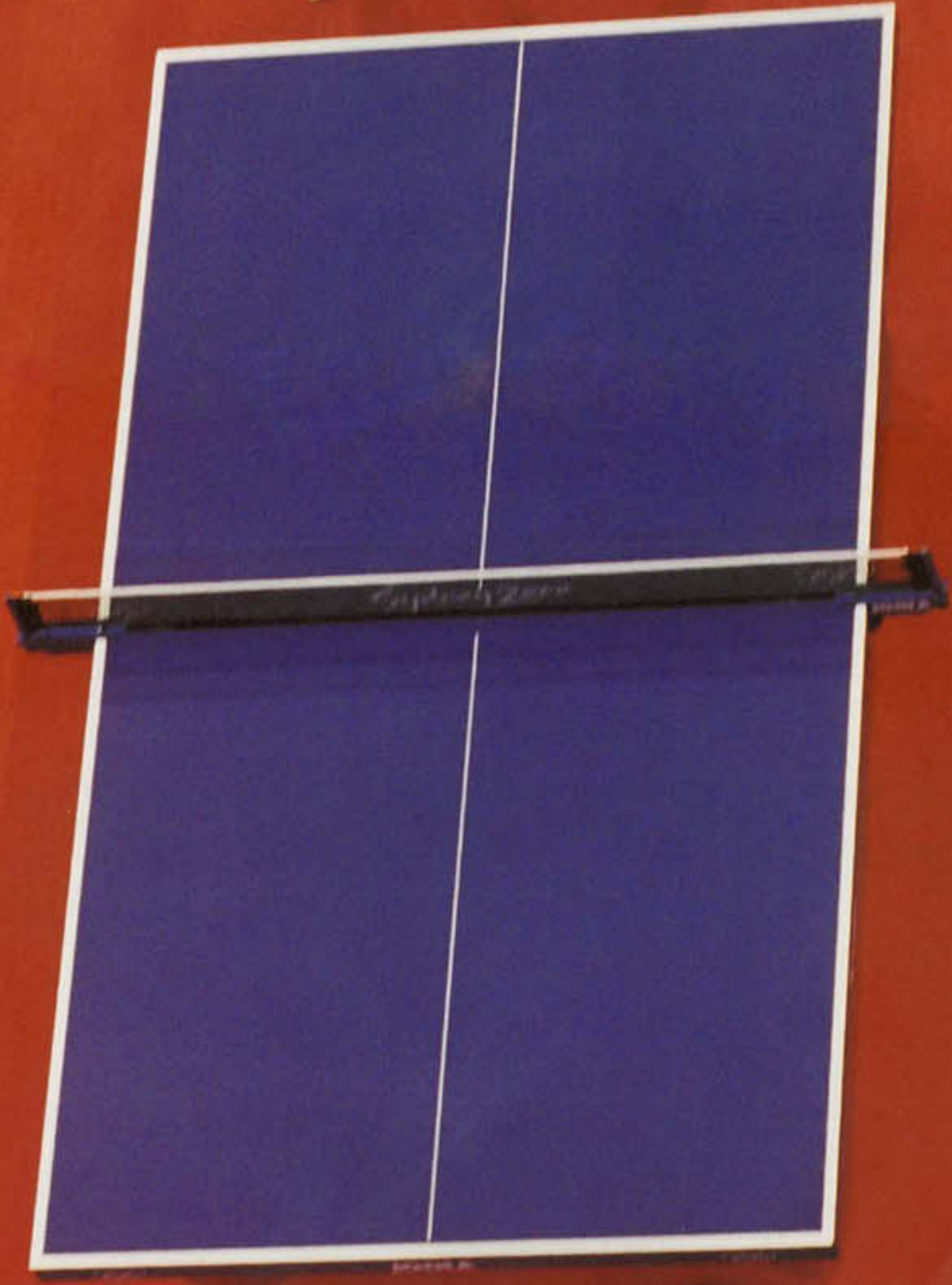




TABLE TENNIS

**State Sports Centre, Sydney Olympic Park
16–25 September 2000**

The enthusiastic court-side support of his nation's royal couple, King Carl Gustaf XVI and Queen Silvia, was not enough for Sweden's Jan-Ove Waldner to break China's monopoly on table tennis gold medals at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. The 1992 Olympic champion Waldner fought a thrilling five-game singles final before conceding seven unanswered points and the gold medal in the final game to China's top seed, Kong Linghui.

The women's singles and men's doubles finals at Sydney 2000 were all-Chinese affairs. While the top seed predictably prevailed over her second seed team-mate in the women's singles, the second seeds took the gold in the men's doubles. Spark was added to the competition by the bronze medal matches, featuring Sweden vs China in men's singles, Chinese Taipei vs Singapore in women's singles, Hungary vs Korea in women's doubles and France vs Korea in men's doubles.

Opened in 1984, the State Sports Centre within Sydney Olympic Park was refurbished for the Sydney 2000 Games. With a spectator capacity of 5000, the State Sports Centre looked spectacular with its red Taraflex flooring, blue tables and blue trim featuring 'Les Jeux Du Nouveau Millenaire' emblazoned in gold. Unlike the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, where eight playing tables were used for preliminary rounds, the Sydney 2000 Games featured only four competition tables, enabling spectators to be closer to the action.

In men's and women's singles there were 64 entries, with a maximum of three players from the same NOC. There were 16 seeded players, seeded in accordance with International Table Tennis Federation regulations, as per the latest world ranking list available at the date of the draw, which was 14 September, two days before the start of competition.

The 16 seeded players were allocated by lot into the draw, separating players from the same NOC. Forty-eight players competed in 16 preliminary groups of three players per group. The winner of each preliminary group advanced to the final draw, round of 32, joining the 16 seeded players. All matches in singles were decided on the best of five games.

In the men's and women's doubles the players in each pair had to be from the same NOC. There could be no more than 43 pairs, with each NOC allowed two pairs. There were eight seeded pairs who were allocated by lot into the draw, separating players from the same NOC.

The first stage of qualification comprised knockout, single elimination, matches to reduce the field from 34 to 32 pairs for women and from 36 to 32 pairs for men. In the second

stage, 24 pairs formed eight preliminary groups of three pairs. Matches in the qualification round were decided by the best of three games. The winning pair from each preliminary group advanced to the final draw, round of 16, joining the eight seeded pairs. Matches in the final round were decided by the best of five games.

Men's Singles

Fifth seed Sweden's Jan-Ove Waldner defeated second seed Vladimir Samsonov of Belarus in the quarterfinals and third seed Liu Guoliang of China in the semifinals for the right to meet world No.1 Kong Linghui of China in the men's singles final. For his part, Kong had outlasted Werner Schlager of Austria in the quarterfinals and Sweden's Joergen Persson in the semifinals.

The State Sports Centre was a sea of red for the gold medal match as the predominantly Chinese crowd cheered their new 'King Kong' to a five-set victory. Conceding the first two games, Waldner won the next two handily and appeared on his way to another gold medal victory. However, the Chinese champion rallied when it counted and went out to a 10–1 lead in the fifth and deciding game. Waldner battled back to 12–15, but Chinese supporters were already holding up oversized gold medals. In the run home, Kong scored six points to Waldner's one and took the match 21–16, 21–19, 17–21, 14–21, 21–13.

Sweden's Joergen Persson defeated China's Liu Guozheng 3–1 in his first win ever against Liu to advance to the semifinals in men's singles. Defeated 3–1 by world No.1 Kong Linghui in the semifinal, seventh seed Persson met third

Table Tennis
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Jing Jun Hong of Singapore warms up before her singles match
2. The State Sports Centre was abuzz throughout the Olympic table tennis competition. Four matches were played simultaneously, reduced from eight matches in Atlanta, to enhance spectator viewing



2

ROBERT GANFLORE/ALLSPORT

Table Tennis
Volume Two
Chapter Five



PAUL HANNA/REUTERS

seed Liu Guoliang, who had defeated Joerg Roskopf of Germany in the quarterfinals, in the bronze medal match. After two close opening games, featuring some spectacular exchanges of smashes, the match stood at one game all. Midway through the third game, Liu appeared to get Persson's measure. In a display of quickness and power, Liu controlled the last two games to win the bronze medal in four games, 21-18, 19-21, 21-14, 21-13.

Women's Singles

World No.1, China's Wang Nan, received a major scare when she was down two games to one and 16-20 to Li Jia Wei of Singapore in the preliminary round. Wang survived five match balls to win the game 23-21 and eventually the

match 3-2. She then disposed of Japan's Chire Koyama in the quarterfinals and Chen Jing from Chinese Taipei in the semifinals to advance to the gold medal match. Her opponent and team-mate, No.2 seed Li Ju, defeated Korea's Ryu Ji-Hye in the quarterfinals and Jing Jun Hong of Singapore in the semifinals.

Playing in the presence of retired Chinese table tennis legend Deng Yaping, voted Chinese Sports Star of the Century and winner of the women's singles and doubles events in Barcelona 1992 and Atlanta 1996, Li Ju fought back from a first-game loss to lead two games to one before Wang took the women's singles gold medal, 21-12, 12-21, 19-21, 21-17, 21-18.

The battle for the bronze medal in women's singles pitted the No.3 seed, Chen Jing of Chinese Taipei, against Singapore's unseeded Jing Jun Hong. Seeking her fourth Olympic medal in table tennis, Chen, who left mainland China after winning the gold medal in 1988, lost the first game but won the next three in a match which, despite the score, was marked by brilliant rallies and exciting table tennis. The bronze medal went to Chen Jing, 18-21, 21-14, 21-15, 21-10.

Women's Doubles

The women's doubles was another all-Chinese affair. Top seeds Wang Nan and Li Ju scraped through the semifinals against fifth seeds Kim Moo-Kyo and Ryu Ji-Hye of Korea with 17-21, 21-15, 15-21, 21-14, 24-22. In the other semifinal, China's Sun Jin and Yang Ying beat Hungary's Csilla Batorfi and Krisztina Toth in four games. In a predictable gold medal match, Wang Nan and Li Ju easily disposed of second seeds Sun Jin and Yang Ying 21-18, 21-11, 21-11.

Microsoft billionaire Bill Gates, attracted by the complexity, power and grace of Olympic table tennis, witnessed a thrilling contest for the bronze medal when the fourth seeds, Hungarian pair Csilla Batorfi and Krisztina Toth, played fifth-seeded Koreans, Kim Moo-Kyo and Ryu Ji-Hye, for the bronze medal.

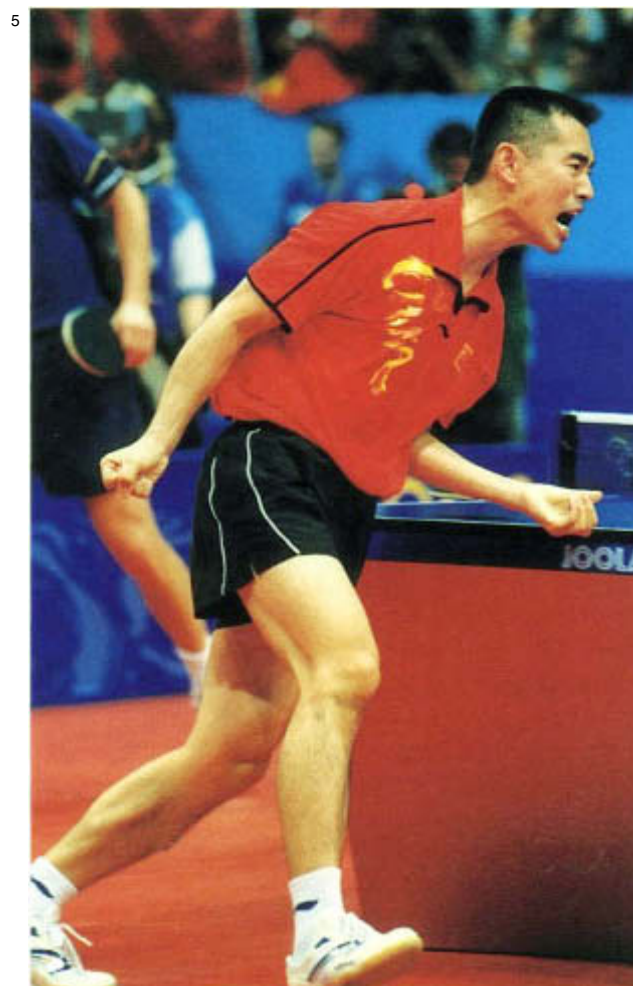
Blasting powerful smashes from the beginning, the Koreans went out to a two-game lead and appeared set for a quick victory. Down 10-13 in the third game, the Hungarian pair battled back, as Toth brilliantly worked the corners of the table. Under pressure, the Koreans lost control of their smashes and Hungary took the third game 24-22.

With the score at 18-18 in the fourth game, the Koreans again lost their accuracy. The crowd came to its feet as the Hungarians won the fourth game and tied the match at two games all. In the fifth game, the Hungarians again worked the corners of the table to lead 10-7, but the Korean pair regained their composure and the lead at 17-14.

Returning a smash virtually from floor level, the Hungarians tied the score at 19-19 before Korea finally prevailed to win the bronze medal in one of the most exciting and emotional matches of the tournament, 21-18, 21-19, 22-24, 19-21, 21-19.



GLEN WATSON/FAIRFAX



SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT

3. Swedish veteran Jan-Ove Waldner, gold-medallist in 1992, keeps his eye on the ball during the final against Kong Linghui of China. Kong won 3-2 and took the gold
4. Liu Guoliang (front), defeated by Waldner in the semifinal, dominates the bronze medal match against another Swede, Joergen Persson
5. Kong Linghui clinched the men's singles Olympic title after a gripping five-set match in front of an excited crowd



Table Tennis
Volume Two
Chapter Five



Men's Doubles

China's dynamic duo, Kong Linghui and Liu Guoliang, the No.1 ranked doubles team, dominated table tennis doubles play in the four years separating Atlanta from the Sydney Olympic Games. In Atlanta Liu became the first man ever to win Olympic gold medals in singles and doubles. Throughout this period Lui, Kong, Wang Liqin and Vladimir Samsonov of Belarus traded the No.1 singles ranking.

In the semifinals Kong and Liu defeated Patrick Chila and Jean-Philippe Gatien of France in four games to move through to the final. The other semifinal was won 3-1 by Wang Liqin and Yan Sen of China over Korea's Lee Chul-Seung and Yoo Seung-Min in a match marked by fast rallies and powerful forehand smashes.

The final, another all-Chinese affair, pitted the world's top two seeded doubles teams against each other. With the match tied at one game all, Yan and Wang rallied from a score of 10-15 to win in the third game 21-19. In an exciting fourth game, Yan and Wang went out to a 7-1 lead but, after a series of spectacular smashes, Kong and Liu rallied to tie the game at 17-17. More brilliant exchanges took Yan and Wang to a 19-17 lead and they ran out winners in a major upset, 22-10, 17-21, 21-19, 21-18.

The bronze medal match in men's doubles table tennis pitted France's fourth seeded Patrick Chila and Jean-Philippe Gatien against Korea's eighth seeded Lee Chul-Seung and Yoo Seung-Min. With the match tied at one game all and France leading 18-13 in the third, Gatien collided with the scorer's desk and the French pair seemed unsettled by the incident.

Korea responded with five unanswered points to tie the game at 18-all. A Chila smash gave France a 20-19 lead and then another furious exchange brought the crowd to its feet as France won the third game 21-19.

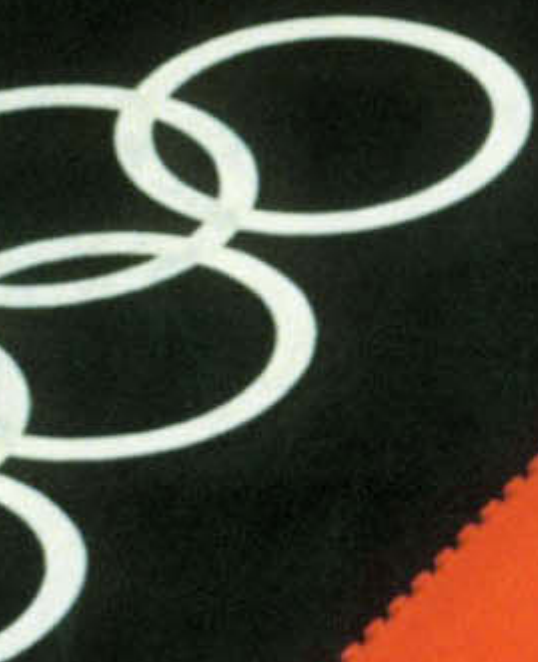
Gatien and Chila then led game four all the way to win 21-10. For Gatien especially, it was a highly emotional victory, "Before these Games I had a big personal drama. I lost my father. I played today for him." The bronze medal went to France, 22-20, 21-23, 21-19, 21-10.



6. A sea of Chinese flags accompanies the medal ceremony after the women's singles competition. China's Li Ju (left) and Wang Nan (centre) won silver and gold, respectively, with Chen Jing of Chinese Taipei securing the bronze medal

7. Patrick Chila and Jean-Philippe Gatien win over Austria in the five-set quarterfinal. The French pair went on to win the bronze medal against Korea
8. Li Ju and Wang Nan joined forces to win the gold in an all-Chinese women's doubles final







TAEKWONDO

**State Sports Centre, Sydney Olympic Park
27–30 September 2000**

Taekwondo, which had been a demonstration sport at both the 1988 and 1992 Olympic Games, made its debut as a full medal sport at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Yet, even before the first athletes competed at these Games, two taekwondo competitors were involved in their own 'gold medal' performance; not by competing in their sport, but through their demonstration of the spirit of Olympism. Their story exemplifies the positive values that the Olympic Movement and sport have to offer.

Americans Esther Kim and Kay Poe first met at a Halloween party arranged by the taekwondo club in their home town of Houston 13 years ago. Since that day the two have been inseparable. Over the years they encouraged each other to be the best they could be in taekwondo, rising to be among their nation's finest in their respective weight divisions. However, in Sydney 2000, because of a reduction in the number of weight divisions, both would have to fight in the 49 kg category. Even though only one would make the trip to Sydney they continued to train together.

Poe entered the Olympic trials ranked No. 1 in the USA, but dislocated her left patella while winning a fierce semifinal. Kim also won through to the final. As she was about to warm up Kim heard the extent of Poe's injury. Her friend could hardly walk, let alone fight.

What happened next stunned the few hundred spectators. Kim feared that if she fought her friend the knee might buckle, finishing Poe's career. The two entered the ring, arms about each other, crying and laughing, and it was announced that Kim had conceded the fight. She was handing the Olympic position to her best friend Poe.

When IOC President, His Excellency Juan Antonio Samaranch, heard of Kim's selfless act he offered her and her father an all expenses paid trip to the Games. This is a wonderful story of selflessness. With Kim watching from the stands Poe, who was regarded as the strongest women's fighter in the under 49 kg competition, kicked off to a good start, leading Denmark's Hanne Hoegh Poulsen 3–1. But in the second part of the contest Poulsen fought back strongly, winning 3–4. "I lost. It happens to the best of athletes," said a distressed Poe, who has lost only one fight in competition since September 1998.

After Poe bowed out Kim was there to comfort her and had no regrets about forfeiting her chance to compete in Sydney. "I'm still proud of her," said Kim. "I'm still going to support her 100 per cent. She didn't let me down, nobody let me down."

The Competition

One hundred and three athletes – 57 men and 46 women – from 51 nations competed across eight weight categories. Australia as host nation was allowed eight athletes, while every other country was limited to four athletes. On each day competition progressed from the preliminary to the medal rounds in one weight category for men and women. Thus to win a medal required great stamina, because a successful athlete had to compete in four and even five events in one day, each bout consisting of three 3-minute rounds with a minute's break between each round. Men's and women's bouts alternated; only one bout was contested at a time, ensuring each received the audience's full attention.

The format for the taekwondo competition was a single elimination tournament for each event. The tournament used a double repechage system to determine the bronze medal. Any competitor who lost to either of the two finalists competed in the repechage.

Women's Under 49 kg

Taekwondo couldn't have had a better start, in terms of publicity, when Australia's Lauren Burns won the first gold

Taekwondo
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Carlo Massimino of Australia and Francisco las of Spain during a preliminary match in the under 68 kg class
2. Lauren Burns of Australia (left) fights Urbia Melendez Rodriguez with a roundhouse kick in the women's 49 kg final



2

SHAUN BOTTERILL/SPORT

Taekwondo
Volume Two
Chapter Five



medal in the women's 49 kg division. Burns had a tough match against Chi Shu-Ju of Chinese Taipei, world champion of 1999, in her first match. Burns was behind in the second round but fought back hard to tie the contest 3–3 and to win on superiority. She had an equally hard match in the semifinal against Hanne Hoegh Poulsen of Denmark, whom she defeated 1–0.

Burns established an early 1–0 lead in the final against Urbia Melendez Rodriguez of Cuba with a face-kick in the first 30 seconds, but the score was tied 1–1 at the end of the first round. Burns established a winning break in the second round, going ahead 4–2, her final point being a spectacular axe-kick. The bronze medal was won by Chi who convincingly defeated Poulsen 4–0.

Both silver and bronze medallists believed the judges, swayed by the noise of the crowd, favoured the Australian but Burns disagreed, "I gathered everything I had and put my heart and soul into it. I should have won."

Men's Under 58 kg

Michail Mouroutsos from Greece was a clear winner in the men's under 58 kg category. After an easy 5–0 win in the first round against Talaat Abada of Egypt, Mouroutsos won a close semifinal against Gabriel Alberto Taraburelli of Argentina, 2–1, to advance to the final. In the gold medal final against Spain's Gabriel Esparza, Mouroutsos was behind 0–1 in the second round but scored points with a succession of kicks to the midsection to lead 3–1. He then finished off the contest with a spinning kick to the midsection to win 4–2.

In the bronze medal contest Huang Chih-Hsiung of Chinese Taipei comfortably defeated Argentina's Gabriel Alberto Taraburelli 3–0. Although Taraburelli fought aggressively he

failed to land effective blows, while Huang took advantage of his opponent's open defence to score points.

Women's Under 57 kg

Diminutive 157 cm Tran Hieu Ngan of Vietnam, appeared overawed when she met Jung Jae-Eun of Korea in the final of the women's under 57 kg category. There was little of the attacking flair that had characterised her high-scoring victories against the Philippines' Jasmine Strachan by 8–3 and the Netherlands' Virginia Lourens by 9–6. In fact Tran received two warnings for inactivity in the second round, resulting in a deduction of one point. Jung was equally tentative in the initial round but won the contest comfortably 2–0 with effective side and roundhouse kicks. Tran's silver medal was an historic first ever Olympic medal for Vietnam.

The bronze medal was won by Turkey's Hamide Bikcin, who demonstrated aggressive spinning kicks and high crescent kicks in her 7–5 defeat of Lourens.

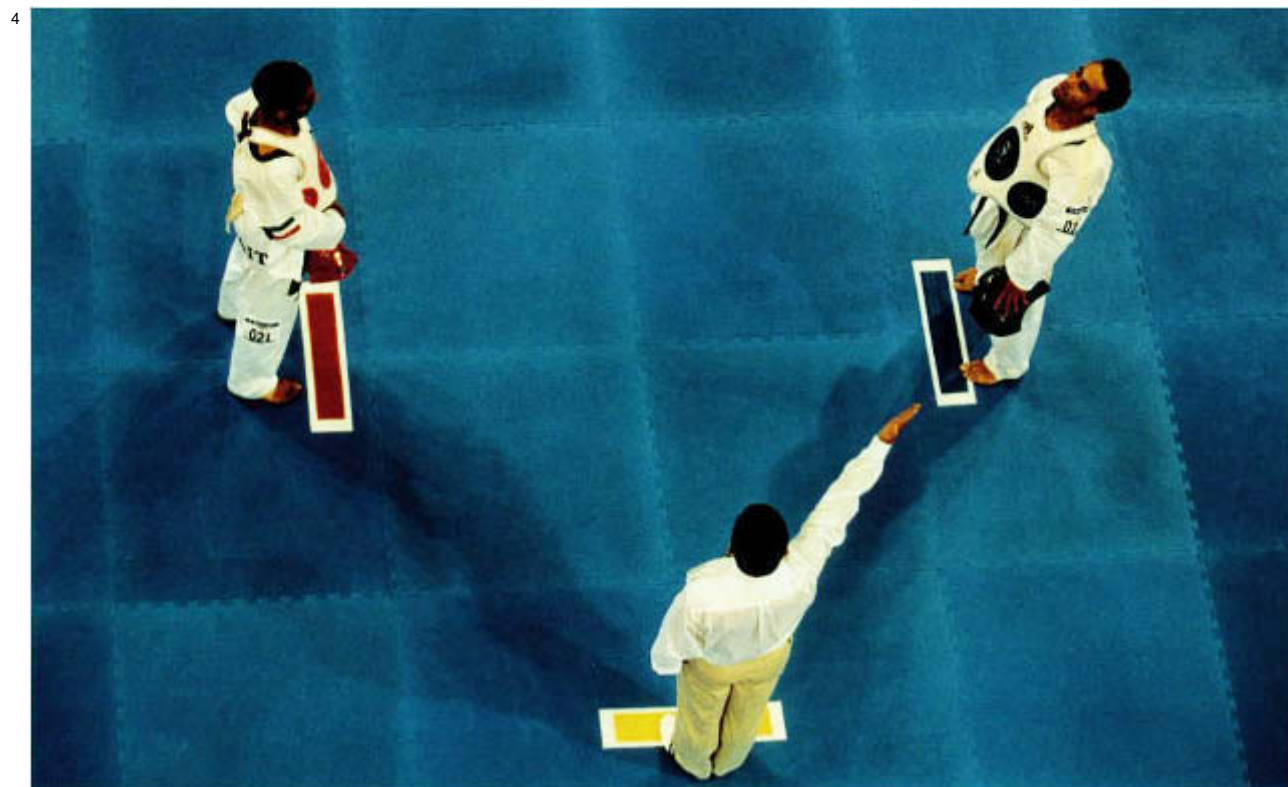
Men's Under 68 kg

Sin Joon-Sik looked likely to achieve a second gold medal for Korea in the men's under 68 kg category. He had disposed of current under 72 kg world champion Hadi Saeibonehkohal of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the semifinal by 5–3. In the gold medal contest against the USA's Steven Lopez, Sin took the lead, scoring a point with a spinning hook kick in the first round. During the second round, two warnings for pushing against Sin cancelled his advantage, making the score 0–0. Lopez, who played a slow waiting game with much defensive jabbing, won the event with a back kick – the first he had attempted for the tournament – with about a minute to go in the third round. The aggressive Saeibonehkohal used his roundhouse kicks to convincingly win the bronze medal, defeating Austria's Tuncay Caliskan 4–2.



3. Lauren Burns, winning Australia's first taekwondo gold medal, is carried from the mat by her coach Jin-Tae Jeong

4. Joseph Salim (right) from Hungary and Naser Buttain from Kuwait greet each other in the men's under 53 kg class. Etiquette and the demonstration of respect is an integral part in the art of taekwondo



5



ROBERT CINFELONE/ALLSPORT

Women's Under 67 kg

Lee Sun-Hee of Korea had a comfortable 6–3 victory in the gold medal final, defeating Norway's Trude Gundersen in the women's under 67 kg category. To reach the final Gundersen had to win a tight semifinal contest against 17-year-old Sarah Stevenson of Great Britain. The Australian crowd adopted Stevenson, supporting her with cries of, "Pommy! Pommy! Pommy! Oi! Oi! Oi!" After a spectacular axe-kick Stevenson led 2–0 at the end of the first round but Gundersen fought back to level the contest at 2–2 to win on superiority. Lee, by contrast, had had a comfortable 4–1 win over the Netherlands Mirjam Mueskens. The bronze medal was won by Japan's Yoriko Okamoto when she defeated Stevenson.

Men's Under 80 kg

Cuba's Angel Valodia Matos Fuentes utilised his speed and long reach to lead 2–1 at the end of the second round in the final of the men's under 80 kg category. He sealed a comfortable 3–1 victory over Germany's Faissal Ebnoutalib with an impressive spinning side kick. Mexico's Victor Manuel Estrada Garibay defeated the 190 cm tall Roman Livaja of Sweden to win the bronze medal 2–1.

Women's Over 67 kg

China's Chen Zhong, exhibiting fast footwork, had a convincing 8–3 victory over the Russian Federation's Natalia Ivanova in the women's over 67 kg final. Chen had earlier defeated Adriana Carmona of Venezuela in the semifinal 8–6.

Canada's Dominique Bosshart showed great fighting qualities, twice coming from behind in the repechage and bronze medal rounds, to win both bouts. Behind 4–5 after two rounds, she fought aggressively to win the bronze medal from Croatia's Natasa Vezmar 11–8.

Men's Over 80 kg

One of the medal favourites in the men's over 80 kg category, the 200 cm Alexandros Nikolaidis of Greece, did not make it past the quarterfinals. He withdrew because of an ankle injury when he was leading Colombia's Milton Castro 2–0.

Australia's Daniel Trenton, ranked in the top three in the world, had a sensational first minute in the semifinal against Castro, scoring four points. He won the bout comfortably by 8–2. Korea's Kim Kyong-Hun was equally impressive in defeating France's Pascal Gentil in the other semifinal by 6–2. Trenton was no match for the polished Kim in the final, however. Kim used his height advantage, 196 cm to 180 cm to cut through Trenton's defences to win easily 6–2.

Pascal Gentil was comfortably ahead in the bronze medal play-off against Khalid Al-Dosari of Saudi Arabia when the latter withdrew as the result of an injury suffered during the second round.

There was a good global spread of medals; the 24 were shared by 18 countries. Korea was the most successful nation with four athletes achieving three gold medals and one silver. Had Korea been permitted to enter more categories the results of the tournament may have been different. Australia and Cuba each secured gold and silver medals and Chinese Taipei earned two bronze medals. China, Greece and the USA each won a gold medal; Germany, Norway, Spain, the Russian Federation and Vietnam, a silver; Canada, France, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Mexico and Turkey each secured bronze.

Taekwondo
Volume Two
Chapter Five



5. China's Chen Zhong performs an axe-kick during her fight against Natalia Ivanova of the Russian Federation in the women's 67 kg final
6. Kim Kyong-Hun of Korea beats Daniel Trenton of Australia in the men's over 80 kg final

6



ROBERT CINFELONE/ALLSPORT



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TENNIS

**New South Wales Tennis Centre, Sydney Olympic Park
19-28 September 2000**

"For me, this is almost bigger than singles," said Venus Williams of the USA. "To have a victory like this with my sister Serena, my sister, a family member, my best friend, doesn't happen very often. It's very rare. So just to be able to stand up together and succeed together on this level has been really, really good. We worked really hard for it, and we beat a lot of tough teams along the way. Nobody plays like this in a grand slam. We had to beat everyone when they are playing better than their best because they are representing their countries."

Venus Williams became only the second woman in history to win the golden double - the singles and the doubles - at the Olympic Games. She joined Helen Willis Moody, who managed the feat in Paris in 1924. In the singles final she defeated the Russian Federation's Elena Dementieva. Playing her eleventh match in ten days, Venus teamed with her sister Serena in the doubles final to beat Kristie Boogert and Miriam Oremans of the Netherlands 6-1, 6-1.

With their striking appearance and even more brilliant tennis, the Williams sisters dominated the women's tennis in Sydney. In winning the singles title Venus stretched her winning streak to 32 matches and put the final touch on a scintillating summer of tennis.

"This is the one moment in time for me, for my country, for my family, for the team," Venus said. "I felt really emotional on the podium. I felt really excited. I watched the Olympics at home when I was a kid, and it was one of my dreams for my dad to win an Olympic medal. It means a lot."

In contrast the men's doubles at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games marked the swan song for Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde after a ten-year partnership. They hoped to bow out in glory, but the competition proved too good.

The Olympic Games tennis tournament was filled with all the excitement of a Grand Slam, with the added pressure that the Olympic Games title could only be won every four years. In winning a marathon match to claim the men's singles title, the Russian Federation's Yevgeny Kafelnikov said the gold medal would mean more to him and his country than his 1996 French Open and 1999 Australian Open Titles. "It is absolutely fantastic," he said. "When I lost the fourth set, I told myself, if I lose this match you are going to regret it for the rest of your life."

Men's Singles

A week can be a long time in sport, and this was demonstrated forcibly in the men's singles competition. In the first round,

the Russian Federation's rising star, Marat Safin, the top seed, who had just beaten Pete Sampras in the US Open, found himself confronted by tenacious, unseeded French player Fabrice Santoro. Safin won the first set 6-1, and obviously expected an easy run to the second round. He momentarily eased off on his power game. Santoro started playing error-free tennis and Safin lost the next two sets, 1-6 and 4-6. His frustration showed and a petulant display followed.

The other main casualty in the first round of the men's singles was No.4 seed, Australia's 19-year-old Lleyton Hewitt. Hewitt lost to his friend and recently crowned US Open doubles partner, Max Mirnyi of Belarus.

Great Britain's Tim Henman, the No.7 seed, also went down in the first round, to unseeded but highly experienced Karol Kucera of Slovakia, 6-3, 6-2.

Marcelo Rios of Chile, who had risen to the No.1 ranking in world tennis but was currently ranked No. 12, also made an early exit, defeated by Argentina's unseeded Mariano Zabaleta in three sets. Michael Chang, Franco Squillari, Wayne Ferreira and Albert Costa also lost. These surprise defeats opened up the draw.

No seeded players were defeated in the second round, other than the host nation's Patrick Rafter, a popular player, who had been experiencing shoulder trouble. He was unexpectedly defeated 7-5, 7-6 (4) by Canada's Daniel Nestor.

In the third round Spain's Alex Corretja lost to Germany's Tommy Haas, who almost did not compete in the tournament

Tennis
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Venus Williams serves during the women's singles final
2. A ball boy during the first-round matches
3. Yevgeny Kafelnikov focussed in his five-set marathon against Tommy Haas, which he would leave as the winner



CLIVE BRUNSKILL/ALLSPORT



CLIVE BRUNSKILL/ALLSPORT

Tennis
Volume Two
Chapter Five



AL BELLOALSPORT

It was thought that the winner would come out of the other quarterfinal where Yevgeny Kafelnikov proved too crafty for Brazil's Gustavo Kuerten, 6-4, 7-5.

In the semifinals Federer fell to Haas, 6-3, 6-2, and Kafelnikov beat Di Pasquale 6-4, 6-4. Kafelnikov had not dropped a set in his relentless drive to the final. Before the Games it had been a relatively poor year for Kafelnikov – his main feat had been making the final of the Australian Open in January – but his mind was set on an Olympic title. Before the match he predicted, "The results I have had this year will be forgotten for me if I win this tournament. That's how important [it is] for myself, obviously, and for my country, too."

The final was an absorbing three-and-a-half hour ordeal, and in a match that either man could have won, Kafelnikov eventually prevailed, winning 7-6 (4), 3-6, 6-2, 4-6, 6-3. He said after the match, in which dominance had ebbed and flowed (to the delight of the spectators), "I talked to myself, you know: You came all the way here to play the final match in the Olympics and if you lose that match you are going to regret it the rest of your life. That's what kept me motivated today and I gave it everything I had."

He threw his racquet to the crowd when the final point was won. Kafelnikov had achieved his dream of a gold medal. The silver went to Haas and France's Arnaud Di Pasquale won a play-off against Roger Federer for the bronze medal.

Women's Singles

The women's singles was more predictable than the men's. None of the top seeds lost in the first round, although Australia's Jelena Dokic won 6-0, 7-6 (1) against No.14 seed, Japan's Ai Sugiyama, in an exciting match, much closer than the score indicated. Number 9 seed, Amelie Mauresmo from France, went down to unseeded Fabiola Zuluaga of Colombia and No.15 seed, the Russian Federation's Elena Likhovtseva, lost to Germany's Jana Kandarr.



NICK WILSON/ALLSPORT

because of injury. There was little evidence of any physical problem as Haas won a skilful and hard-fought match featuring long backcourt rallies and varied pace, 7-6 (7), 6-3. Two others to go by the wayside in this round were Sweden's Magnus Norman, the No.3 seed, favoured by many to win the Olympic title, and Australia's last remaining hope, the big-serving Mark Philippoussis, who was outmanoeuvred by the Russian Federation's Yevgeny Kafelnikov, 7-6 (4), 6-3.

One quarterfinal pitted Moroccan player Karim Alami against Switzerland's Roger Federer, both unseeded players, and it was Federer who advanced to the semifinals. Probably the toughest of the quarterfinals was the duel between Max Mirnyi and Tommy Haas. It was the German who won out, 4-6, 7-5, 6-3. France's Arnaud Di Pasquale thrived in the Olympic Games atmosphere and easily handled the No.8 seed from Spain, Juan Carlos Ferrero, 6-2, 6-1.



CLIVE BRUNSKILL/ALLSPORT

- 4. An emotional victory in the bronze medal match for Arnaud Di Pasquale, who dedicated his win to his deceased mother
- 5. Jelena Dokic cools down during her match against Japan's Ai Sugiyama
- 6. A sell-out crowd witnessed Venus Williams defeat Elena Dementieva for the gold medal in her thirty-second consecutive victory



PAT SCALAPFAIRFAX

A sensation occurred in the second round as the No.1 seed, Lindsay Davenport of the USA, withdrew because of a stress fracture of the foot. Other second round departures included Spain's Conchita Martinez, who lost to Slovakia's Karina Habsudova, and the No.13 seed from Croatia, Silvija Talaja, who was beaten by Italy's Silvia Farina-Elia.

The third round reinforced the validity of the seedings, as the top seeds advanced to the quarterfinals. In the quarterfinals, unseeded Australian Jelena Dokic was pitted against the more experienced Amanda Coetzer of South Africa, the No.7 seed, and Dokic won a match of contrasting sets 6-1, 1-6, 6-1. In the second quarterfinal the Russian Federation's emerging talent Elena Dementieva defeated Austria's Barbara Schett, 2-6, 6-2, 6-1.

Monica Seles of the USA continued her march onwards with an easy 6-0, 6-2 victory over Dominique van Roost of Belgium. In the last quarterfinal the dogged veteran Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain fought her normal tenacious battle against the hard-hitting Venus Williams, but lost 3-6, 6-2, 6-4.

In the semifinals Dokic lost a close encounter against Dementieva, 2-6, 6-4, 6-4, despite a highly supportive crowd. Dementieva was too steady on the critical points. Dokic said, "I probably let myself down after the first set. I stopped attacking and tried to get into volleys. She liked that." In the other semifinal, in one of the most exciting matches of the women's Olympic tournament, Venus Williams prevailed over Monica Seles, 6-1, 4-6, 6-3. It was a tremendous match, but Williams simply had too much power and athleticism.

The final was almost a foregone conclusion, though the Russian Federation's Elena Dementieva fought a brave contest and never gave up. Venus Williams won 6-2, 6-4. In the previous four months Williams had also been victorious at Wimbledon and the US Open. The bronze medal went to Monica Seles of the USA, triumphing 6-1, 6-4 over Jelena Dokic, who could not match her power and consistency.

Men's Doubles

The men's doubles was considered a virtual shoo-in for the venerable Australian team of Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde, nicknamed the 'Woodies'. They were clearly the national and sentimental favourites, as they were playing their last tournament as a team after ten years together. They had won numerous tournaments and a home-town Olympic Games victory would be the perfect finale.

When the Woodies strolled out to centre court to play the Canadians Sebastien Lareau and Daniel Nestor for the final of the men's doubles, the huge crowd greeted them with a long, loud, standing ovation. But it was not to be the fairy tale ending the Australians had dreamed of. The Canadians won, 5-7, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (2). It was Canada's first Olympic team medal of these Games and a gold at that. The Woodies had to settle for silver. Todd Woodbridge said, "I'm not disappointed about losing because I know we played as hard as we possibly could. I was just emotional because it was over."

In the bronze medal match Spain's Alex Corretja and Albert Costa defeated David Adams and John-Laffnie De Jager of South Africa, 2-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Women's Doubles

An anomaly of the women's doubles was that the mercurial Williams sisters, Venus and Serena, were unseeded, and they marched through the competition losing just one set. It was thought that the No.2 seeds, Spain's Conchita Martinez and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, might have been too experienced for the Williams sisters, but they were defeated in the second round.

Their opponents in the final, Kristie Boogert and Miriam Oremans of the Netherlands, were also unseeded. The final was over in 49 minutes. The Williams sisters simply had too much power for the Dutch pair, winning 6-1, 6-1. Venus and Serena Williams were the stars of the Olympic tournament, pocketing three gold medals. Their power, athleticism and consistency were simply too much for the talent of these Games. Younger sister Serena summed it up, "This takes the cake, because every year I have the opportunity to win a slam. But this is every four years. You have one moment in time and I really wanted to capitalise on it."

The bronze medal was won in a play-off by Els Callens and Dominique van Roost of Belgium over the Belarus pair, Olga Barabanschikova and Natasha Zvereva.



STEPHAN JANSENAFF

Tennis
Volume Two
Chapter Five



PAT SCALAPFAIRFAX

7. It was the end of a match as well as a long partnership for Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde (front), who lost the doubles final to Sebastien Lareau and Daniel Nestor

8. Spectators brave the elements during a rain break at the Tennis Centre

9. Venus (left) and Serena Williams share a sisterly laugh during the doubles match against Julie Halard-Decugis and Amelie Mauresmo





TRIATHLON

Sydney Opera House, Sydney
16–17 September 2000

Just as the last party revellers were straggling home from the Sydney 2000 Opening Ceremony celebrations, the world's best female triathletes squeezed themselves into wetsuits, preparing to plunge into Sydney Harbour for the first leg of the women's triathlon. Triathlon made its Olympic Games debut in Sydney and was given the privilege of opening the sports competition.

As the day dawned and the sun danced on the magnificent sails of the Sydney Opera House, the setting was perfect for a great contest. The athletes produced two of the best days of sporting competition and showed that triathlon was a worthy addition to the Olympic program.

Over the past decade Australian athletes, in particular the women, have dominated world triathlon events. At every world championship since Avignon in 1989, an Australian male and female have featured in the top ten places. At the 1999 world championships in Montreal, Australian women completely dominated, filling the first five places. It was no secret that the Olympic Games organisers were hoping Australia would win medals in the opening event, excite the nation and propel Australia's medal campaign. The pressure rested on the athletes, particularly on the shoulders of Michelle Jones, ranked No.1 in the world.

"There is an incredible expectation that one of us will win. This is especially the case among the Australian public. And the media has fanned the fires of patriotism. Sporting journalists and commentators want an Australian gold to lift the spirits of the nation at the start of the Games.

"But I am realistic enough to know anything can happen. The records show world champions or world record holders, more often than not, don't win at the Olympic Games," Jones said. Her words would ring true as the final stages of the race unravelled.

Sydney's triathlon course hugs the foreshores of the harbour from the Sydney Opera House to the Royal Botanic Gardens to the Domain. The course is spectacular, demanding equal skill in all three disciplines.

The sections of the triathlon competition included:

Swim – 1.5 km – one triangular lap of Farm Cove, Sydney Harbour.

Cycle – 40 km – six laps of the lower central business district and Royal Botanic Gardens.

Run – 10 km – two laps of lower central business district and Royal Botanic Gardens.

Transition – Sydney Opera House forecourt.

Women's Competition

The start of a picture-perfect Sydney day ended in a picture-perfect finish for the women's triathlon on 16 September 2000. From the moment the 48 competitors walked into the competition area in front of the Sydney Opera House, the air tingled with excitement. Some athletes jumped in the air in response to the jubilation of the occasion while others walked solemnly, focusing on the task ahead. But no matter who won, each of them would go down in history as a participant in the first ever Olympic triathlon.

The athletes dived off the pontoons to swim 1.5 km in chilly Sydney Harbour. It was no surprise when the USA's Sheila Taormina emerged from the water in a time of 18:36.48. Taormina is a world-class swimmer, having won a gold medal in the 4 x 200 m relay at the Atlanta Olympic Games. Running barefoot along the coarse bright blue artificial grass, she shed her goggles, wetsuit and cap. With a lead of 36 seconds she was obviously enjoying herself as she waved to the crowd, leaving the transition area on her bike.

The race enjoyed enormous public support with an estimated 80 000 people lining the course and watching on large screens from the Opera House.

Athletes made their way down Macquarie Street and through the Botanic Gardens. Every so often the crowd at the Opera House would rise to their feet and cheer loudly as a competitor entered the viewing area, moving inexorably closer to the end of the race.

Triathlon
 Volume Two
 Chapter Five



1. Competitors line up at the start of the women's race
2. During the swimming leg, triathletes were protected by an electronic shark repellent device, installed specifically for the Olympic races
3. Spectators on the steps of the Opera House cheer on the competitors during the last leg of the triathlon. 300 000 more lined the streets to catch a glimpse of the Olympic action



2

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3

JAMIE SQUIREVALLSPORT

Triathlon
Volume Two
Chapter Five



ADAM PRETTYMALLSPORT



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It did not take long before the chase pack caught Taormina. Even with a light breeze and a dry track, however, eight athletes, including Canada's Carol Montgomery, crashed and were forced to withdraw from the race. Montgomery, who was also competing in the 10 000 m track cycling event, was forced to withdraw from both events. Joelle Franzmann of Germany was the first cyclist back to the transition area in 1:24:54.78, but Australia's Michellie Jones left transition narrowly in front, going into her strongest discipline – the run. The lead changed many times and at the end it was a battle between Switzerland's Brigitte McMahon and Jones. It

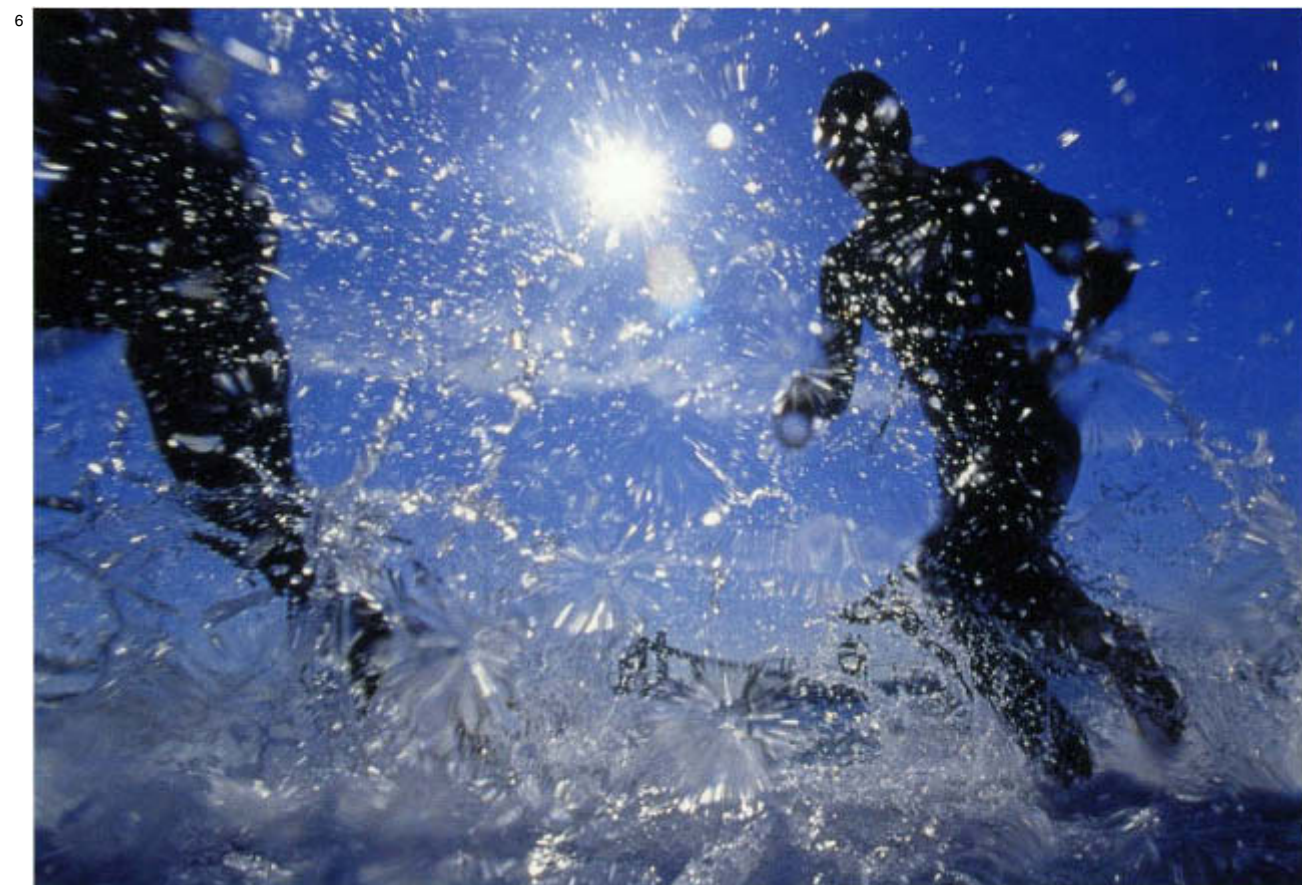
almost became a duplicate of the World Cup event, held on the same course only a few months earlier, where Jones had won ahead of McMahon.

Over the last few kilometres McMahon set a cracking pace, as Jones sat on her shoulder with the crowd willing her on. As the athletes entered the final finishing shoot, McMahon got a slight break and crossed the line in 2:00:40.52 with Jones just two seconds behind. Another Swiss triathlete, Magali Messmer, took bronze in 2:01:08.83 in one of the closest finishes in women's international competition. With the expectations of a nation on her shoulders Jones was momentarily disappointed after the race. Then she grinned and exclaimed, "Winning an Olympic silver medal for Australia – that ain't bad."

Both McMahon and Messmer were former Swiss national swimming champions – McMahon held the Swiss 100 m and 200 m backstroke titles, Messmer the 400 m individual medley. Their strong swimming background and strength on the hills ensured their success.

Although the loudest cheers were always reserved for the home country, the crowd applauded every nation's competitors. Shi Meng of China was the last home in a time of 2:16:40.73. Like many of the other non-medal winners, she rode or ran alone for much of the gruelling distance but her efforts and skills were appreciated by the spectators.

As McMahon was joined by her young son and husband on the dais, the Sydney Harbour Bridge with the Olympic rings formed an impressive backdrop. The Swiss flag snapped smartly in the breeze, signalling the changing of the guard and the birth of a new sporting nation.

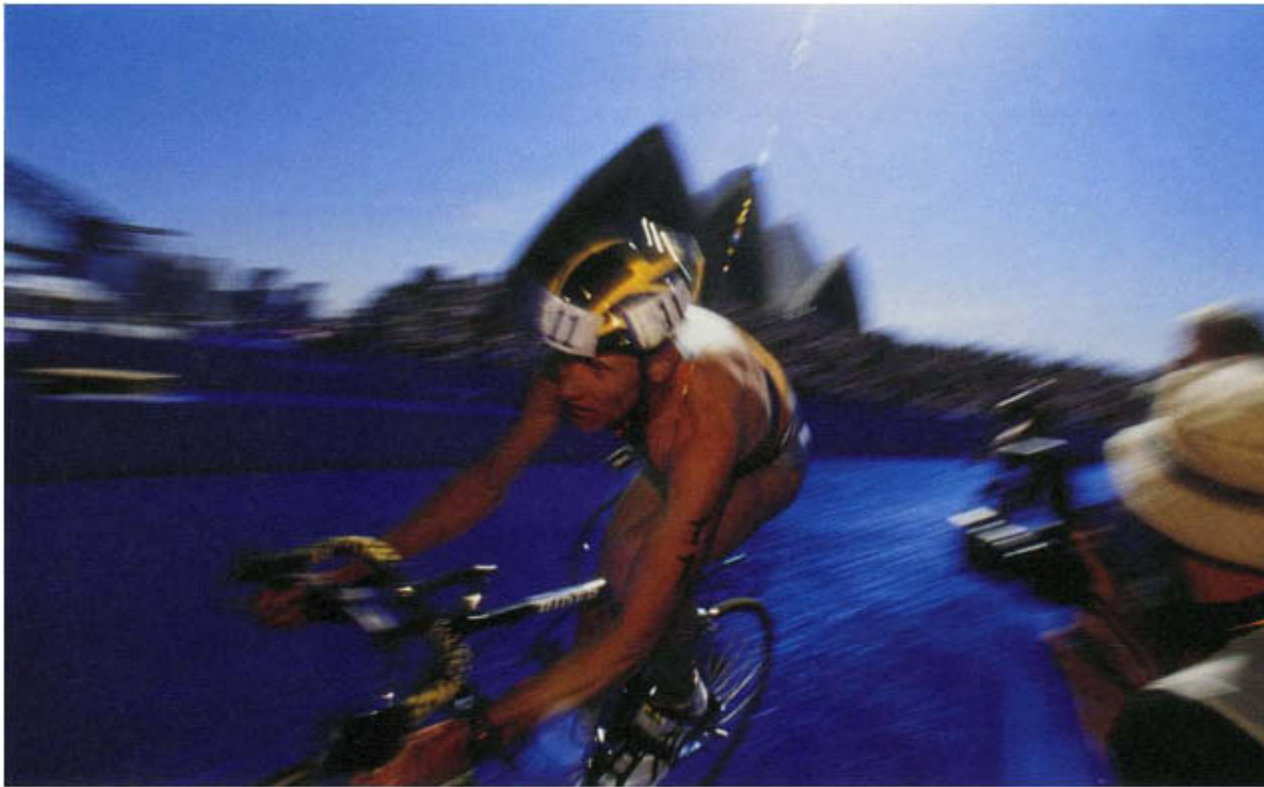


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4. Michellie Jones of Australia, ranked number one in the world and one of the top favourites, leads compatriot Loretta Harrop (left) and Magali Messmer of Switzerland (right) along the waterfront at the Royal Botanic Gardens

5. Magali Messmer (left), Brigitte McMahon (centre) and Michellie Jones pose for the cameras after the race

6. Competitors during the men's race emerge from the 18°C waters of Sydney Harbour



7

Triathlon
Volume Two
Chapter Five



JAMIE SQUIRE/ALLSPORT

Men's Competition

Sunday 17 September was a slightly warmer day, as an estimated 400 000 spectators lined the triathlon route to get a glimpse of Olympic champions in action. The seas were choppier than for the women's competition the day before, adding an extra challenge to an already tough swim course, while the white sails of the Opera House provided shade for dignitaries, IOC members, royalty, the Australian Prime Minister and other enthusiastic spectators.

At 17:17.69 Australia's Craig Walton was first out of the water, cheered on by the home crowd. Following closely behind was race favourite, Great Britain's Simon Lessing.

Three cycle-packs chased each other and eventually blended into one, with the lead altering often as athletes slip-streamed each other and talked tactics along the way. Commentators informed the crowd that some cyclists had fallen, however, all but one were able to remount their bikes and complete the arduous race.

World champion Olivier Marceau of France finished the bike leg with incredible power in 1:16:04.29. Looking strong, it seemed victory was well within Marceau's grasp but with 10 km to run, anything could happen. Entering the last lap, the two breakaways still led but the pack was clearly narrowing the gap.

Approaching the Opera House for the second time in the run leg, with only a few kilometres to go, Germany's Stephan Vuckovic took the front position and looked to be the winner. But with 150 m to go, Canada's Simon Whitfield sprinted down the last hill, passed Vuckovic and crossed the finish line in a time of 1:48:24.02. The German was 13 seconds behind. Czech Republic representative, Jan Rehula, came home to win bronze in 1:48:46.64.

Having come from 28th position, Whitfield's joy knew no bounds. What was even more incredible was that Whitfield was in fact one of the competitors who had crashed on the bike leg, got right back on and in a show of true Olympic spirit had gone on to win.

Whitfield was ranked 13th in the world and had finished seventh at the 2000 World Triathlon Championships. With an Australian father and a grandmother living in Sydney, Whitfield was the story even for the Australian media, who were desperate for a home-town gold. Whitfield won hearts when he said, "I'm deeply proud to be Canadian, but part of my heart belongs to Australia."

It was two glorious days of competition where new athletes emerged to claim the sport's greatest mantle. History had been created and the sport should continue to prosper at future Olympic Games.



8

7. Rob Barel of the Netherlands zooms past photographers during the cycling leg
8. Canadian Simon Whitfield, surprise gold medallist, is congratulated by his fans

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VOLLEYBALL: BEACH

Beach Volleyball Centre, Bondi Beach
16–26 September 2000

The beach volleyball competition, held on the sands of iconic Bondi Beach, seemed to replicate the magic of the host city itself during the Games – warm, brash, friendly and unrestrained. The venue started as one of the most controversial of the Games, due to local objections to its construction on Australia's most famous beach. Yet it ended the program celebrated as one of the best. Almost 170 000 spectators packed the two daily sessions at the stadium, guaranteeing beach volleyball's Olympic future. The move from an artificial beach in an inland city at the 1996 Games to Australia's most famous beach in 2000 was inspired.

The sport was immensely popular. Each day's competition became a raucous celebration, with thumping music after each point. It was a carnival atmosphere, with dancing in the seats, colourful costumes, vivid banners and professional cheerleaders. One spectator commented, "It doesn't feel like you're at an Olympic event. You feel like you're at a beach carnival."

The uncrowned king of the Brazilian cheer squad was Marcelo Silva, a radio promotions manager from Rio de Janeiro, who dressed in a fluoro yellow super-hero costume with green underwear worn on the outside and topped by a green and yellow fright wig. The huge 'El Bolo' also entertained the crowd with his headgear and antics. Crowd announcer Dave Callan, The Lifesaver, kept the crowd amused during breaks in play, encouraging them to do slow and fast Mexican waves or to move to the music of the macarena.

Forty-eight teams – 24 men's and 24 women's, 96 athletes in total – contested the tournament. The men's teams came from 17 countries and the women's from 15. Australia had the largest number of teams – five – followed by Brazil, Germany and the USA, which each had four. After three qualification rounds the 24 teams in the men's and women's competition were reduced to 16. Then followed four sudden-death rounds: the round of sixteen, the quarterfinals, semifinals and finals.

The program was similar to Atlanta, but the time span was increased from 7 to 11 days, plus a rest day in the middle, to allow 64 of the 74 matches to be played on the centre court, ensuring greater public exposure.

The 10 000 seat stadium, rented from the Swiss firm Nussli, was erected in ten weeks at a cost of A\$15 million. The stand was dismantled in October 2000 and shipped back to Switzerland. A further A\$1 million was spent upgrading the historic Bondi Pavilion as a form of compensation for local residents.

Athletes praised the venue and the tournament. Miguel Maia of Portugal said it was "such a spectacular venue", John Child of Canada declared that the "sand conditions, the venue and the crowd were perfect". Robert Heidger Jr of the USA said, "It's the nicest sand I've been on and I've been on a lot of beaches."

The tournament was played under perfect sunny skies until the finals, when the skies turned grey and light showers fell during the men's final.

Women's Competition

It was the day of the women's final. A fortuitous serve by Australia's Natalie Cook hit the tape and rolled over the net to drop well in front of Brazil's Adriana Behar and Shelda Bede, breaking an 11–11 deadlock and enabling the Australian team of Cook and Kerri Pottharst to win an enthralling first set of the women's final. Cook later commented that she could never have practised for such a serve. It was a dramatic comeback against the world's top-ranked Brazilian team who had dominated the sport for the previous two years. After Cook and Pottharst had initially taken a lead of 4–1, the Brazilian team played with great consistency to take control and enjoyed two set points at 11–8. However, the Australians, spurred on by the raucous home crowd, staged a stirring comeback to take four straight points and the set.

The second set followed a similar pattern, with the Australians taking an early lead. Behar and Bede led at 10–8, but the Australians again surged back to take the set 12–10, with the powerfully serving Pottharst producing six aces for the match, including a world record serve of 85 kph. She was well-supported by Cook.

Cook and Pottharst were determined to improve on their Atlanta results. "We said to ourselves we are not going home without a medal. We were not going to let all the hard work slip by us. Everything we had we put right into it," Cook said.

Throughout the match the Brazilians fought tenaciously and Shelda Bede won some fine points with her powerful serve.



4

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Volleyball
 Volume Two
 Chapter Five



1. Sunny skies blessed most of the beach volleyball competition, such as during the match between the USA and Portugal
2. A Norwegian fan cheers during the men's preliminary matches
3. Yukiko Takahashi of Japan signals gameplay to her partner during the bronze medal match
4. The location of the beach volleyball stadium added to the exuberant atmosphere in the stands



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AL BELO/ALLSPORT



3

DARREN MCNAMARA/ALLSPORT

Volleyball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



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The Brazilians were devastated by their defeat, with Bede declaring, "We are warriors but we have not won the war." It was a remarkable victory. Cook and Pottharst had beaten Behar and Bede only three times in their last 17 meetings.

Both the finalists had progressed comfortably from the round of sixteen. The Brazilian silver medallists won comfortably against the German team of Friedrichsen and Musch by 15–9, then they defeated the second Australian team of Manser and Gooley by 15–7 and the Japanese team of Takahashi and Saiki by 15–10.

The Australians had an easy win against the Chinese team of Xiong and Chi by 15–2 in the round of sixteen, but had to fight harder to win against the Italian team of Bruschini and Solazzi in the quarterfinal. After the Australians stormed to a 12–0 lead in just 17 minutes, they relaxed and allowed the Italians to score the next seven points, before regrouping and winning 15–11.

Cook and Pottharst had to defeat the other Brazilian team, Adriana Samuel and Sandra Pires, in the semifinal to reach the gold medal play-off. The Australians were initially behind by 0–3 but went on to play a powerful game to win 15–6. Samuel and Pires then beat the consistent Japanese team of Yukiko Takahashi and Mika Saiki, 12–4, 12–6 to win

the bronze medal. The Japanese team, which finished fourth, exhibited some fine defence and produced some clever floating serves.

Men's Competition

A red card issued by the referee for time wasting had a vital bearing on the men's semifinal between the USA and Portugal. After the US team of Dain Blanton and Eric Fonoimoana established a commanding early lead over the Portuguese team of Miguel Maia and Joao Brenha, the Portuguese fought back with great defensive play and some deft placements to lead by 11–10. It was then that the referee gave Blanton a red card for time wasting. The red card meant that Portugal secured a vital additional point to lead by 12–10. Blanton, visibly upset, harnessed his anger in producing two aces and another unplayable serve. The epic 71-minute match was brought to a rapid conclusion with the Americans winning 15–12.

In the other semifinal the tournament's third seeds, Brazilians Ricardo Santos and Jose Marco Melo, had a much easier task, winning easily by 15–5 against the German team of Jörg Ahmann and Axel Hager in just 31 minutes. The 200 cm Santos was a dominating figure on the net, achieving some good blocks and spikes. The Brazilian team was pleased to have a relatively easy semifinal because they had been involved in a physically draining 81-minute quarterfinal against Canada's John Child and Mark Heese, which they eventually won 15–13.

The men's final followed a similar pattern to the women's. The favoured Brazilians, Melo and Santos, had a chance to take out the tight first set but the American pair of Blanton and Fonoimoana fought back to win 12–11. From early in the second set the underdogs were never headed, winning 12–9 in 101 minutes. Scoring the final point with a massive Fonoimoana roof block, the US team looked as though they could hardly believe they were the Olympic champions, not really surprising as it took the pair until the last tournament of qualification to cement their place at the Olympic Games. It was a meritorious victory because rain and a heavy ball did not suit the Americans. Blanton said, "I was a little concerned because our game is a fast game, a power game, and we



HAMISH BLAIR/SPORT



JASON CHILDS/SPORT THE LIBRARY

5. A vociferous Brazilian fan led the chants and cheers for his team throughout the competition in Bondi
6. Kerri Pottharst of Australia dives for a ball during the women's final
7. Australians Natalie Cook and Kerri Pottharst on court in the final against Brazil's Adriana Behar and Shelda Bede



8

Volleyball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



GARY M PRIOR/ALLSPORT

want the balls to be light." Germany's Ahmann and Hager won the bronze medal, comfortably beating the Portugal's Maia and Brenha 12–9 and 12–6.

Beach volleyball originated on the beaches of California and for years the US teams were untouchable at the top of the sport, but as the game grew in popularity so too did the depth in competition, and the USA fell in the world rankings. Blanton and Fonoimoana were ranked just 11th in the world leading into the Olympic Games. But the Olympic Games produce special performances and the records show that in both Olympic men's competitions – beach volleyball has been a full medal sport just twice at the Olympic Games – the USA has claimed gold.

Both the gold medal finalists had tough encounters in the round of sixteen. Americans Blanton and Fonoimoana started slowly, were behind 1–5 and had to work hard to defeat the Norwegian team of Joerre Andre Kjemperud and Vegard Hoidalen 15–13. The Norwegians served nine aces but this was nullified by 21 service faults.

Austrians Nikolas Berger and Oliver Stamm came close to defeating Melo and Santos in the round of sixteen. They led by five points at one stage and were first to reach match point. However, an ace and a roll-shot from Santos set up a Brazilian victory by 16–14.

Brazilian gold medal favourites, Jose Loiola Jr and Emanuel Rego, were defeated in this round by the Spanish team of Javier Bosma and Fabio Diez in one of the longest and best matches of the tournament. Before winning Spain had to save five match points, coming back from 11–14 to eventually win 17–16.

The President of the International Volleyball Federation, Dr Rubén Acosta, was enthusiastic about all aspects of the competition, stating that "Bondi will be the model for future world beach volleyball competitions, with rock music and a lot of fun". Because of the wonderful atmosphere, location and competition, Acosta hopes to hold an annual leg of the world circuit on Bondi Beach.



9

TORSTEN BLACKWOOD/AFP

8. Kevin Wong of the USA in action during an elimination match against Australia. Wong and partner Robert Heidger Jr. advanced to the quarterfinals where they lost to compatriots Eric Fonoimoana and Dain Blanton

9. In a nerve-racking quarterfinal match against Spain, Germany's Jorg Ahmann dives for a return. Ahmann and team mate Axel Hager beat Fabio Diez and Javier Bosma to meet Brazil in the semifinal

10. Fonoimoana attacks while Jose Marco Melo of Brazil attempts a block during the men's final

11. Dain Blanton celebrates after a final of frantic rallies and dives. The US victory in the rain brought an explosion of cheers at the sold out Bondi stadium



10

SHAUN BOTTERILL/ALLSPORT



11

DARREN ENGLAND/ALLSPORT



VOLLEYBALL: INDOOR

Sydney Entertainment Centre, Darling Harbour

Pavilion 4, Sydney Olympic Park

16 September–1 October 2000

The spotlight of the indoor volleyball competition was always going to be on the Cuban women's team – regarded as one of the most successful sporting teams in the world. Would they be capable of winning a third successive gold medal at the Olympic Games? The current world champions, they possessed an explosive athleticism that made them jump higher, hit harder and reach further than any other team.

Despite their impressive credentials their run to the final was not all smooth spiking. They were defeated by the Russian Federation in the preliminary round in an enthralling five-game match. In the semifinal they narrowly defeated the Brazilian team in a marathon match, and made their way to the final by the barest of margins.

The final was a replay of the preliminary match between Cuba and the Russian Federation, but this time the final score favoured the disciplined and talented 'warriors' from Cuba, 25–27, 32–34, 25–19, 25–18, 15–7. Cuba had now won every major international women's competition since the 1992 Barcelona Games, building an unprecedented 35–3 record in world championships and the Olympic Games. "We are Cubans. We came here to do the best, and that meant fighting until the end," captain Regla Bell said.

The difference in ability and execution between the two teams in the final was minuscule, as they battled back and forth in a match befitting the sport's two superpowers.

Cuba had a 24–21 lead in the opener before letting it slip away. In the second game, Cuba led 24–23 but again failed to close. Both teams fought for and lost four more game points until the Russian Federation pulled ahead 33–32, with excellent play by Elena Godina.

Regla Torres, Cuba's best player, used her height to bring her team back into the match. "We were very tense in the first two sets, because of the pressure of winning a third gold medal," Torres said. "Then we relaxed and changed the way we played."

Cuba jumped to a 20–9 lead in the fourth game and withstood a late rally. In the deciding game the Cubans took an 8–4 lead and kept hitting, as the young Russian Federation team folded.

The volleyball competition at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was competitive, fast and exciting, with the world's best teams playing in front of capacity crowds. New rules added further excitement and intensity to the play, and made the game more spectator-friendly.

Unlike many Olympic sports which have ancient origins, volleyball is relatively new, invented in 1895 at a YMCA at Holyoke, Massachusetts in the USA, by William G. Morgan for the 'gentle exercise of its middle-age male members'. The YMCA movement went world-wide, and so did this 'gentle' game.

By 1914 the game became more physical when the first version of the modern spike (the overhead attacking shot) was unleashed.' The 'three-touch' rule – a team can touch the ball three times on its side of the net – soon followed. The game spread largely because International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) presidents Paul Libaud and Rubén Acosta exerted great leadership from 1948 to 2000.

In 1949, the IOC recognised the FIVB. Men's and women's volleyball debuted at the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo, with the Soviet Union and Japan, respectively, winning the first gold medals.

New Rules in Sydney

The most important change to the rules under which volleyball was played at the Sydney 2000 Games was that points could be scored regardless of which team served. Previously a team had to serve to win a point. Rally-point scoring means the first four sets are now played to 25 points and the fifth set tie-breaker to 15 points, with a two-point margin required for victory.

The second important rule change was the introduction of the 'libero', a defensive specialist who wears a different coloured playing shirt from the rest of the team and acts almost as a seventh starter. The libero can replace any player in back court, but can play only defence.

The final rule change was that serves that touch the net and dribble over are now in play. Previously, a serve that touched the net was deemed out.

Both the men's and women's competitions had two pools of six teams which played a round-robin series. The top four teams from each pool went on to the quarterfinals; the winners of that round went on to the medal rounds and the balance played off in the classification games to decide fifth to twelfth places.

Men's Competition

During the men's preliminary series the defending champions from the Netherlands put away Australia in three sets. The Russian Federation defeated the USA 3–1; Cuba overcame Spain by the same score; Brazil got past Egypt 3–0, and Argentina beat Korea 3–1 in another. In another preliminary match, Yugoslavia dispatched a talented but seemingly unfocused US team in three straight games, prompting coach Doug Beal to half-seriously cry, "If you can jump-serve a volleyball at 75 mph, I'd like a word with you." The Australian men and women both won their third preliminary games – their first Olympic volleyball victories.

At the end of the men's preliminaries Brazil and Italy remained undefeated while the Netherlands and the Russian Federation had both won four games. Before a huge crowd Brazil lost to Argentina in a tense four-set quarterfinal, 17–25, 25–21, 25–19, 27–25.

Over 8000 spectators appreciated exciting volleyball as Argentina advanced into the Olympic medal rounds. In other quarterfinals, it was the Russian Federation 3, Cuba 2; Italy 3, Australia 1; and Yugoslavia 3, Netherlands 2.

Volleyball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



14



13

12. Opposite page:
Lloy Ball of the USA serves during a preliminary match against Yugoslavia

13. Players of Yugoslavia and the USA shake hands before their match

14. Australian fans livened up the atmosphere at the Sydney Entertainment Centre during the quarterfinal match between the host nation and Italy

Volleyball
Volume Two
Chapter Five



ANTONIO SCORZA/AFIP

Interestingly, all four semifinalists came from pool B and both matches were nail-biters. It was Argentina versus the Russian Federation and Yugoslavia against Italy. In a difficult match, Yugoslavia prevailed over Italy 27–25, 34–32, 25–14, while the Russian Federation won over Argentina 27–25, 32–30, 21–25, 25–11.

Italy, the world champions, were again the bridesmaids at the Olympic Games. Throughout the 1990s they were the kings of international volleyball, winning three world championships and world league titles, but could never transfer this dominance to the Games. In Atlanta, after defeating the Netherlands in the preliminaries, the Italian team was outplayed in the final in a five-set thriller.

The medal distribution was settled on the last day of Olympic competition. Italy prevailed against Argentina, winning the bronze 3–0, with scores of 25–16, 25–15, 25–18. The gold medal game featured Yugoslavia versus the Russian Federation.

While the captain of the Australian men's team was quoted as saying "Our eighth place finish was a dream come true", for the finalists only the top spot could suffice. In a high-powered 68-minute final, Yugoslavia won, with the Russian Federation taking silver.

The high class final was fought out in a vibrant atmosphere bolstered by members of Australia's Yugoslavian and Russian communities among the 9000 strong crowd, who sported their national colours, waved flags and chanted loudly. Yugoslav coach Zoran Gajic said after the match, "I'm really satisfied with the way my team played. It seemed that whatever was needed to win the game, it would be done."

The 1996 bronze medallists succeeded on all fronts against the fancied Russian Federation, with superior blocking, defending and attacking. The Yugoslav side consistently mixed powerful spikes and serves of more than 100 kph with deft touches such as dummy moves or soft contacts which pushed the ball just over the net and wrongfooted their opponents. Yugoslavia trailed in the first set 21–20, but took the final three points. In the second set Yugoslavia squandered a 10–5 lead and the Russian Federation levelled at 17–17, but then the Yugoslavs

stood firm. In the final set Yugoslavia's Vladimir Grbic, rated among the world's premier hitters, produced match point with a spike. Team-mate Ivan Miljkovic's 19th point was a medal winning kill.

Nikola Grbic, the Yugoslav captain, was delighted with the result. "The importance of what we achieved today will probably hit us only in a couple of days," he said. "We've been close to a result like this quite a few times before but we always let go before we achieved it. I think I will be the happiest man in the world when I return to my country. It's seven in the morning there, but everyone is on their feet."

The victory marked Yugoslavia's emergence as a new volleyball power and also signalled the return of the Russian Federation to the top level. As part of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation had dominated the sport, striking gold in 1964, 1966 and 1980. By 1992, however, it had slumped to seventh place in Barcelona and just missed out on the medals in Atlanta.

Women's Competition

In the quarterfinals, Brazil defeated Germany 3–0. It was the Russian Federation over China by the same score, and again it was 3–0 to the Cubans in their match against Croatia. The USA beat Korea 3–2 to join Cuba, the Russian Federation and Brazil in the semifinals.



WAYNE TAYLOR/FAIRFAX



CLIVE BRUNSKILL/ALLSPORT

15. In a heated final, Russia's Igor Choupelov spikes the ball while Andrija Geric (left) and Goran Vujevic of Yugoslavia jump for a block

16. Italian players are upset after losing the semifinal to Yugoslavia

17. Italian fans pose after their team's success in the bronze medal match

18. Yugoslavia's Vladimir Grbic climbs the referee's chair after his team beat the Russian Federation in the final



JACQUES DEMARTHON/AFIP

19



KATSUMI KASAHARA/PHOTO

In a classic struggle before a capacity crowd, stirred into an animated frenzy, Cuba defeated Brazil 27–29, 25–19, 21–25, 25–19, 15–9 in their semifinal. Cuba's coach, Louis Calderon, was honest and gracious in congratulating "the great courage and great display of Brazil. This game could have been ... to decide the gold medal."

The other semifinal was surprisingly competitive: the USA lost a tough match to the Russian Federation 25–15, 23–25, 25–15, 26–28, 15–8. Everyone agreed that the USA was 'fantastic' in their loss and coach Mick Haley said, "I am very pleased with this team, their fighting spirit, their never-die attitude, and they have come together as a wonderful example of a team."

The Russian Federation's coach, Nikolai Karpol, added to the colour and excitement of the final with his uncharacteristic coaching style. Karpol drew a noisy chorus of boos from the crowd at the Entertainment Centre for screaming at his players during time-outs, and often after misplayed points.

"I always have to say I'm an actor, performing in front of spectators," said the infamous Karpol, who has coached the Russian Federation team for 20 years. "The players create the screenplay."

At one point, it appeared that one of his star players, Liubov Chachkova, was yelling back at him when Karpol, serenaded by loud booing, nearly walked onto the court while shouting at another of his players who had let an errant shot graze her arm.

Brazil swept the USA in straight sets to win the women's volleyball bronze medal. Brazil repeated their bronze medal success of the 1996 Atlanta Games by overpowering the US team 25–18 25–22 25–21, led by the superior outside hitting of Virna Dias, Leila Barros and 20-year-old Erika Coimbra.

Brazil had too much quickness, strength and desire for the USA and closed out the second set by winning the last three points. They used a four-point run to grab an 8–4 lead in the third set and were never seriously threatened thereafter.

The US players, with Danielle Scott, Logan Tom and Sarah Noriega stepping up, fought off three match points before Dias's spike was blocked out of bounds by Noriega for the clinching point and Brazil's bronze medal.

Volleyball

Volume Two

Chapter Five



20

ROSS KINNAIRD/ALLSPORT



21

BETH A. KEISER/PHOTO



SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT

22

19. Cuba's Regla Torres delivers a spike against a three-block in the women's semifinal against Brazil

20. Italian players walk away in disappointment as the German women's team celebrates victory in a preliminary match

21. Russia's head coach Nikolai Karpol, an infamous presence on the volleyball court, kisses Elizaveta Tichtchenko after a five-set victory in a preliminary match against Cuba

22. Cuban players celebrate their continued reign in Olympic volleyball





WEIGHTLIFTING

**Sydney Convention Centre, Darling Harbour
16–26 September 2000**

In ancient times women were forbidden from watching, let alone participating in, the Olympic Games. Even when they did make their debut at the Olympic Games in 1900, there was a limit to what they could do – femininity had to be upheld at all times. At the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games women celebrated 100 years of participation in Olympic competition, with more women competing in more sports and events than ever before. Women's weightlifting featured on the Olympic program for the first time, and captivated the audience with tight duels and record-breaking performances.

Leading the charge was China's women's team, winning every gold medal available to them. Holding 16 of the 21 world records, China won gold with their four lifters – Yang Xia 53 kg, Chen Xiaomin 63 kg, Lin Weining 69 kg and Ding Meiyuan in the over 75 kg. So powerful were the Chinese that it was widely accepted that they would have gone close to completing a clean sweep of the seven gold medals if their squad had not been restricted to four competitors.

Arguably the most exciting event was the women's 53 kg competition between Yang Xia of China and Li Feng-Ying of Chinese Taipei. In the fight for gold the two smashed five world records.

It all began when Li, the clean and jerk world record holder, opted to go after the world snatch record with the second of her two lifts. Asking for 98 kg to be loaded onto the bar, Li hoped to put pressure on Yang. Her successful lift of 98 kg appeared to inspire Yang, who countered with 97.5 kg.

Li then opted for 100 kg and another world record to reassert her position, but could not manage the lift. Yang then stood on the platform, and with her face straining in pain hoisted the total above her head to claim one of the shortest-lived records in sport and take a 2.5 kg advantage into the clean and jerk.

In the clean and jerk the two did not step on to the lifting platform until the other eight competitors were spent and back in the training room. Li opened with a solid 115 kg lift, but Yang replied with a new clean and jerk record of 122.5 kg.

To recover the 2.5 kg lost in the snatch competition, Li went for 125 kg, but failed. Yang immediately seized the moment and went for 125 kg herself. Her lift teetered but she safely lifted and sealed the gold. Li could do no more. Her attempt at 127.5 kg lasted only a moment before the bar crashed heavily onto the platform.

Yang's success in weightlifting increased China's gold medal haul. Women's weightlifting had a long wait before being

included on the Olympic Games program, but it proved it was a worthy inclusion.

Men's 56 kg

The men's 56 kg lightweight contest started the weightlifting competition sensationally, with Halil Mutlu of Turkey smashing all three records on his way to the gold medal: 138 kg for the snatch, 167.5 kg for the clean and jerk, for a combined total of 305 kg. Ivan Ivanov of Bulgaria was originally second with China's Wui Wenxiong third. Zhang Xiangxiang, also from China, was promoted to the bronze following Ivanov's disqualification for a positive drug test.

Women's 48 kg Division

History was made on 17 September, when an unassuming 16-year-old lifter from Papua New Guinea, Dika Toua, became the first woman to lift in an Olympic Games. The competition progressed quite predictably with Bulgaria's Izabela Dragneva winning with ease from Tara Nott of the USA, who fought off strong challenges from the two Indonesian lifters, Raema Lisa Rumbewas and Sri Indriyani. The joy of the event was to fade with the later disqualification of Dragneva after a positive result in her drug test. Nott was awarded the gold with Rumbewas claiming silver and Indriyani claiming bronze.

Nott, who dabbled in gymnastics and soccer before taking up weightlifting, will go down in the record books as the first Olympic champion in women's weightlifting.

"I would obviously want to win the gold on the platform, but it is good news to know that those who cheat are getting

Weightlifting
Volume Two
Chapter Five



1. Ronny Weller of Germany celebrates winning silver in the men's over 105 kg event
2. A competitor prepares for his next lift
3. Lin Weining from China powers up the weights during the women's 69 kg event, taking the gold and one of China's seven weightlifting medals

3



PATRICK HERTZOG/AFP

Weightlifting

Volume Two
Chapter Five



4. Turkey's Halil Mutlu reacts after setting a world record in the snatch during the men's 56 kg event

5. The Sydney Convention Centre proved to be a popular venue during the weightlifting competition



caught," said Nott. "It will be that we will have a level playing field, and myself and others will be able to win on the platform, rather than after a drug test."

Men's 62 kg

Standing astride the weightlifting world for many years has been the Turkish athlete known as the Pocket Hercules, Nairn Suleymanoglu. Everyone at the men's 62 kg event on the second day of competition expected him to further his immense reputation. However, a tactical error saw him fail to register a lift in the snatch.

Suleymanoglu began with the bar at an Olympic record weight of 145 kg. After three failures he was eliminated from the competition, and his dreams of a fourth Olympic Games medal faded. In the end, Nikolay Pechalov from Croatia won with ease, 7.5 kg clear of Greece's Leonidas Sabanis and Bulgaria's Sevdalin Minchev Angelov. Minchev Angelov was later disqualified and stripped of his medal after testing positive to a banned substance and the bronze was awarded to Gennady Oleshchuk of Belarus.

Days 3 and 4 featured only women's competition. The week began with the news of the Romanian team's reinstatement into the competition. They had been banned by the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) after a third lifter in their team had tested positive in out-of-competition tests. A fine of US\$50 000 was paid to allow their remaining lifters to resume their competition.

Women's 58 kg

After the records tumbled in the women's 53 kg class no records fell in the 58 kg division, though there was plenty of drama. In an inexplicable piece of poor judgment, Ri Song Hui from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea declined her third lift in the snatch.

Soraya Jimenez Mendivil of Mexico courageously lifted 127.5 kg with her third lift in the clean and jerk to win her country's first gold medal in Olympic weightlifting. Khassaraporn Suta of Thailand won the bronze.

Women's 63 kg

The fourth day featured the women's 63 kg and 69 kg divisions. Both events produced world records and were won by lifters from China. Chen Xiaomin triumphed in the 63 kg class with an Olympic and world record in the snatch, lifting a weight of 112.5 kg in her first lift. The former record of 110 kg had been set by countrywoman Lei Li at the 1999 Asian Championships in Japan.

Chen was the Asian Games champion in 1998 and 2000 and won three gold medals in both the 1995 and 1996 world championships. She hefted only 130 kg in the clean and jerk, but that was enough to land her the gold medal, after lifting a total of 242.5 kg, a new world record for the total. "My coach asked me to break the world record in the snatch and the total and I did it," Chen said.

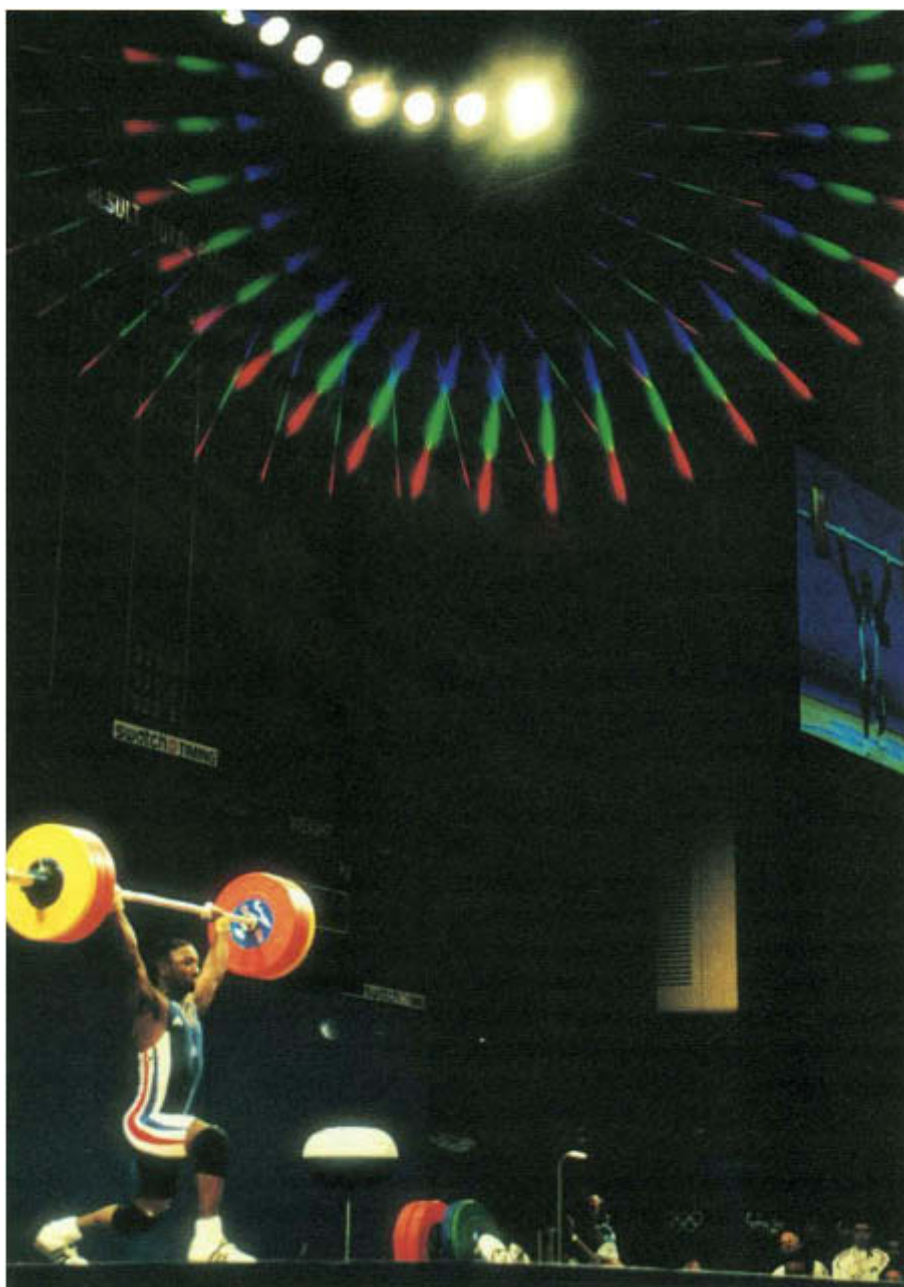
Second in the snatch was the Russian Federation's Valentina Popova, lifting 107.5 kg, and third was Ioanna Chatziioannou from Greece.

The lifting was of the highest order, with Chen breaking the world snatch and total records. The excitement and record-breaking continued in the evening's events.

Women's 69 kg

In the 69 kg division, Lin Weining of China was under pressure from the first lift, as Erzsebet Markus of Hungary broke the world record in the snatch. Lin rose to the challenge and reeled in the deficit 2.5 kg in the clean and jerk and, with the totals even, the Chinese woman won on body weight. A very relieved Lin said, "I was under a lot of pressure. I had back pain and a leg injury to overcome. I'm kind of happy but I could have done better."

Karnam Malleswari won bronze, giving India its first Olympic weightlifting medal. "I'm very happy to win the first medal for India. I am blessed to win and it is bad luck I didn't get the gold," Malleswari said.



Men's 69 kg

The men's 69 kg contest embraced the very best features of weightlifting with classical lifting and some exotic styles. The audience gave the lifters tremendous support, with Valerios Leonidis of Greece and Zhang Guozheng of China in particular receiving plenty of local support. Between sections, the audience was buzzing; all knew that records were about to be broken. Georgi Markov of Bulgaria, with a 165 kg in the snatch, needed 192.5 kg in the clean and jerk to achieve this mark.

Markov came in at 182.5 kg at his first attempt, but his compatriot Galabin Boevski easily lifted 185 kg with his first attempt. The tension rose and the applause grew as Leonidis and Zhang both successfully lifted 185 kg. Markov responded with 187.5 kg and 20-year-old Rudik Petrosyan of Armenia equalled this weight, setting a new world junior record. However, with his final lift Boevski took control and totalled 357.5 kg to win gold and create a new world record for the clean and jerk. Markov took the silver and Sergei Lavrenov of Belarus won the bronze medal. Once again the Bulgarians demonstrated their dominance.

Women's 75 kg

In winning the women's 75 kg division Maria Isabel Urrutia won Colombia's first weightlifting gold medal. The competition ended with three lifters in contention for the gold but Urrutia endured, with Ruth Ogbeifo of Nigeria winning silver and Kuo Yi-Hang of Chinese Taipei claiming the bronze.

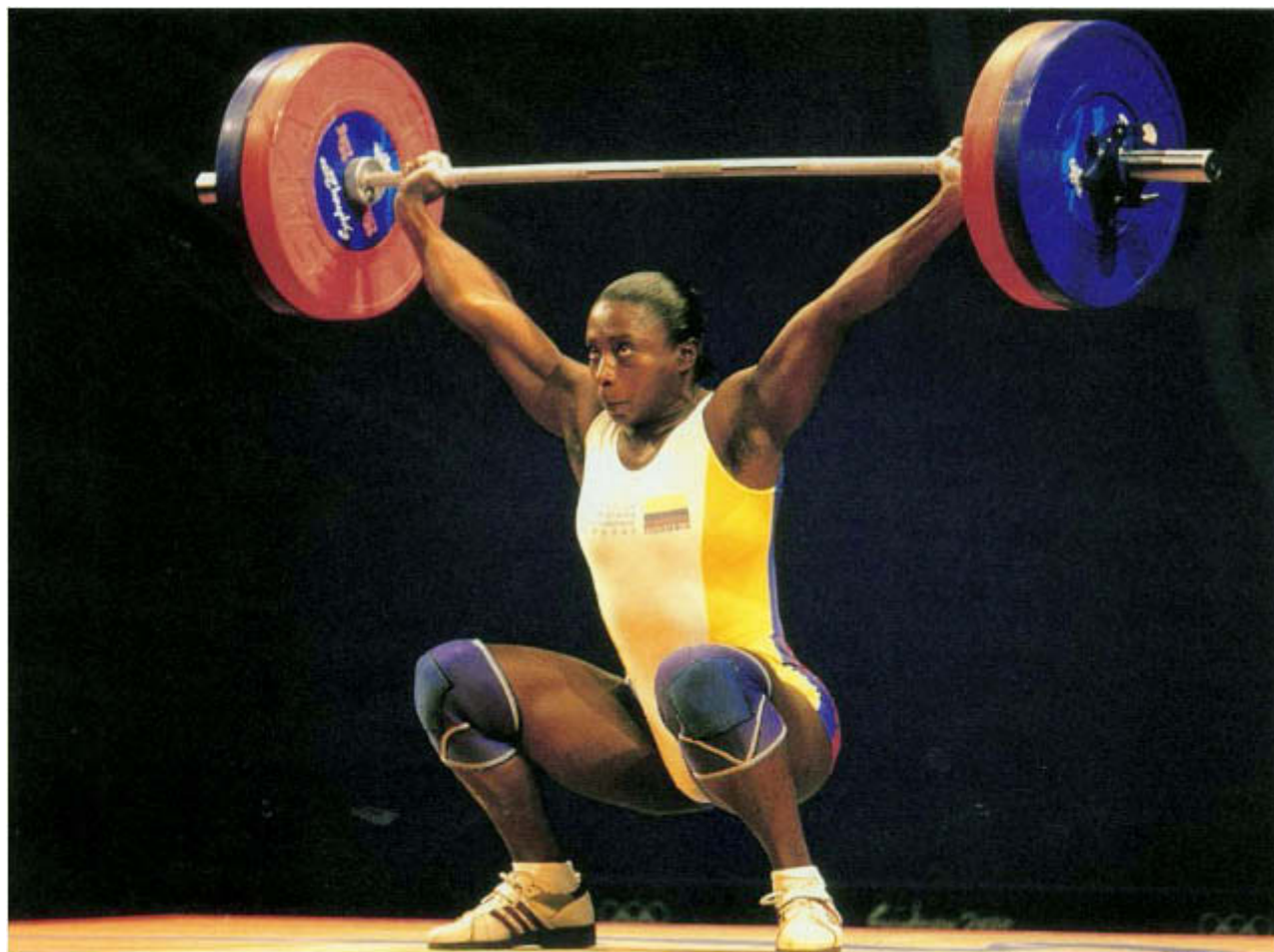


DAVID GUTTENBERGER/SPORT

Following a rest day, competition resumed on Friday 22 September. Further controversy shrouded the competition as the IWF suspended the entire Bulgarian team from further competition. The secretary general of the IWF, Dr Tamas Ajan, announced that several Bulgarian lifters had tested positive to a diuretic and consequently the whole team was suspended.

Men's 77 kg

Excitement surrounded the men's 77 kg event and with crowd favourites China and Greece competing, a vocal, animated audience was assured. China's Zhan Xugang and Greece's Viktor Mitrou provided an excellent contest. Both lifted a total of 367.5 kg but Zhan won on body weight by a mere 280 grams. Arsen Melikyan of Armenia was third, lifting 365 kg. Following the Bulgarian team's expulsion, medal



STU FORSTER/SPORT

Weightlifting

Volume Two
Chapter Five



MICHAEL STEELE/SPORT

6. Ingo Steinhöfel of Germany struggles to start a lift in the men's 77 kg event, in which he placed seventh

7. Nigeria's Evelyn Ebhomien summons all her will during the women's 58 kg event. Ebhomien failed to lift the weights in the clean and jerk but placed seventh in the snatch

8. Maria Isabel Urrutia is concentrated during her performance in the women's 75 kg competition. She would win the first-ever weightlifting gold medal for her home country, Colombia

Weightlifting
Volume Two
Chapter Five

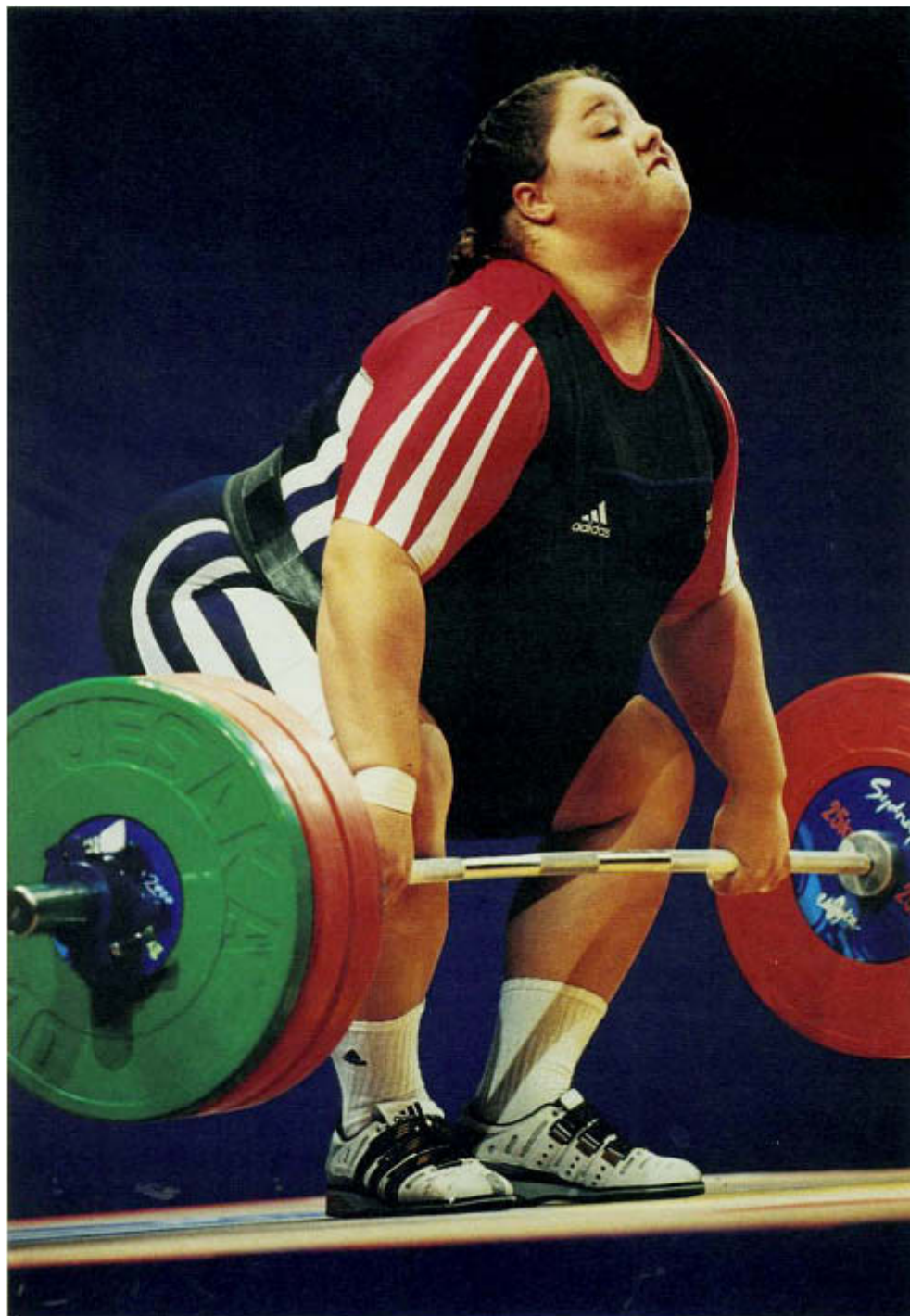


9. Young Cheryl Haworth of the USA in action during the women's over 75 kg. Matching her personal best, she lifted a total of 270 kg and took the bronze. Haworth only started lifting after 1996 and has since broken all US records

contender Plamen Zhelyazkov did not compete nor did two former Bulgarian lifters, Badr Nayef and Nader Abbas, representing Qatar, who had apparently contracted diarrhoea the previous evening.

Women's +75 kg

The women's +75 kg division provided an exciting finale to the inaugural women's Olympic weightlifting competition. Ding Meiyuan of China won after a world record-breaking battle with world No.1 Agata Wrobel of Poland. Competing for the title of the world's strongest woman was certainly a young woman's contest; Ding at 21 years, Wrobel two years younger, with USA's Cheryl Haworth, at 17 years of age, winning bronze. Ding set five new world records to Wrobel's three, breaking the total record with each of her clean and jerk attempts. Ding Meiyuan completed a clean sweep for China, which won gold with each of its four women lifters.



Men's 85 kg

The men's 85 kg division was the most hotly contested in the competition. Greek weightlifter Pyrrhos Dimas was attempting to win his third consecutive medal. His incentive to win was heightened by the Greek government's promise of a grant of US\$250 000 for gold medallists.

The contest was very close and kept the excited audience on the edge of their seats. The excessive cheering noticeably distracted Dimas as he attempted his first two lifts in the snatch. He eventually settled and managed a successful lift of 175 kg. He was outlifted by Georgia's George Asanidze, who lifted a huge 180 kg to lead after the snatch. Germany's Marc Huster also outlifted Dimas with 177.5 kg.

In the clean and jerk, Dimas recovered, clearing 215 kg. Huster lifted 212 kg while Asanidze could only manage 210 kg. All three lifters totalled 390 kg, so the results had to be decided by body weight. Dimas was awarded the gold, winning his third gold medal, from Huster and Asanidze.

Men's 94 kg

The gold harvest continued for Greece on the ninth day of the weightlifting. Akakios Kakiasvilis became the third weightlifter in history to win three successive Olympic golds and confirmed he would go for four in a row, on home soil at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. During 1999 only three lifters bettered the 400 kg mark and of those Kakiasvilis was clearly the favourite in Sydney.

At the 1999 World Championships in Greece, none of Kakiasvilis's 400 kg plus rivals had been within a sizeable 7.5 kg of him. Only twice in a career that began in 1988 has the former native of Georgia been beaten by total. He spoke of the pressure and burden of being the favourite before the Games, "The hardest part is, of course, to live up to your goals, achievements and reputation, proving that you were worth the honour that Olympic gold represents. Which is why, if I manage to win my third, it will be more than a dream come true."

He did achieve his dream and also received the US\$250 000 bonus from the Greek government. Teenage sensation Szymon Kolecki of Poland pushed him all the way, matching him for the total weight, but again the Greek lifter won on body weight. Kakiasvilis's best in the snatch was 185 kg, 2.5 kg more than Kolecki, who clawed back the difference in the clean and jerk. Both lifted a total of 405 kg but as Kakiasvilis weighed 1.52 kg less he won the division. Alexei Petrov of the Russian Federation finished a mere 2.5 kg behind to claim the bronze.

Men's 105 kg

Tradition dictates that the final two days' competitions are left for the 'big' and even 'bigger' men! The men's 105 kg event was dramatic even before it began. Bulgarian Alan Tsagaev, previously disqualified with the rest of his team, was allowed to take part after his appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) was upheld. The CAS panel stated that it believed the blanket ban was illegal. Ukraine champion Igor

DOUG PENNINGER/SPORT

10



ADAM PRETTY/ALLSPORT

Men's +105 kg

The Islamic Republic of Iran's team joyously acclaimed Tavakoli's gold in the 105 kg as it was their first gold of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Their joy was doubled on the final day when Hossein Rezazadeh sensationally beat pre-competition favourites, legendary German Ronny Weller and the 170 kg Russian giant Andrei Chemerkin, to win the 105 kg+ super-heavyweight division.

This blue ribbon event attracted the competition's biggest audience. The auditorium was full to overflowing. In the media area journalists anxiously sought positions and it appeared as if every aficionado was there to witness the final weightlifting contest of the Sydney Olympic Games. With his fantastic final lift of 210 kg Ronny Weller broke the world record for the snatch and it seemed he would win gold. But Rezazadeh calmly approached his final lift, prayed to Allah and stunningly snatched 212.5 kg to immediately reset the world and Olympic records. Chemerkin, Atlanta Olympic gold medallist, clearly misread his opponents as he entered far too low with 190 kg. The Iranian looked very assured in the clean and jerk and moved from 255 kg to 260 kg with his last lift for a total of 472.5 kg, shattering the world record. Ashot Danielyan of Armenia, ranked first in the world, took third position with a combined lift of 465 kg. To an enormous fanfare, Chemerkin had to break the world record for the clean and jerk to have any chance of a medal. He attempted 272.5 kg with his third but failed. Chemerkin believed he had missed a medal by a mere 2.5 kg, but Danielyan was later stripped of his medal for a positive drug test to nandrolone, and Chemerkin received the bronze medal after all.

Razoryonov established a 2.5 kg lead after the snatch, lifting 192.5 kg, but faltered in the clean and jerk to end with a total of 420 kg. There was tremendous excitement in the final phase as Hossein Tavakoli of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the reinstated Tsagaev moved up the rankings with 235 kg in the clean and jerk. The 22-year-old Tavakoli's better snatch of 190 kg saw him prevail over the Bulgarian, winning the gold by 2.5 kg. Former Bulgarian Said Asaad, now lifting for Qatar, took bronze with 420 kg.

Weightlifting

Volume Two
Chapter Five



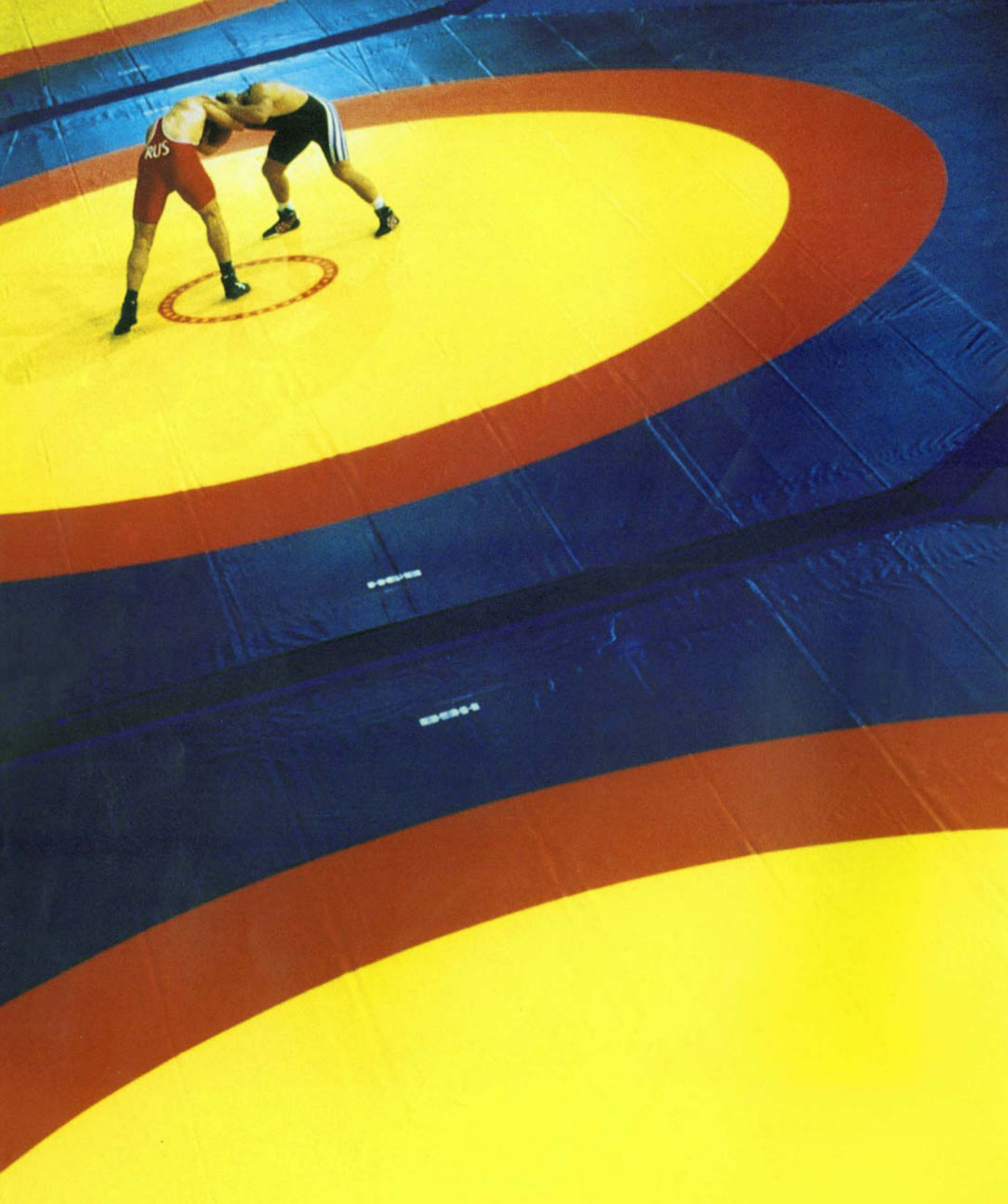
10. The heavy weights: Hossein Rezazadeh of Iran (centre), Ronny Weller of Germany (left) and Ashot Danielyan of Armenia after the men's over 105 kg competition which had the sellout crowd on its feet. Rezazadeh had watched two world records fall before he stepped to the bar and set two world records to win the gold. Danielyan was later disqualified due to positive results in the doping tests

11. Shane Hamman of the USA takes a moment after completing his lift. He would place tenth in the over 105 kg event

11



DONALD MIRALLES/ALLSPORT





WRESTLING

**Sydney Exhibition Centre, Halls 1 and 2, Darling Harbour
24 September–1 October 2000**

He was the undisputed king of wrestling, the 'toughest man in the world'. The Russian Federation's Alexandre Kareline had not lost a bout in international competition since 1987. The triple Olympic gold medallist went into the Greco-Roman final of the men's 130 kg division as the undisputed favourite. Claiming a fourth gold appeared to be a mere formality and would have placed him with American discus thrower Al Oerter, long jumper Carl Lewis and Danish sailor Paul Elvstrom as the only athletes to have won four successive gold medals in the same event at an Olympic Games. His opponent was the 29-year-old Rulon Gardner from the USA, a virtual unknown. Gardner was one of nine children who had grown up on an isolated dairy farm in Star Valley, Wyoming, a long way from an Olympic final against one of the sport's icons. The last time Gardner and Kareline met was two years earlier in the world championships. The mighty Russian won that match 5–0 after it went into overtime.

Kareline seemed lethargic throughout the Olympic final. It was 0–0 at the end of the first period, after which the wrestlers clinched, the first to break the hold automatically losing a point. The judges had to study the video of the match, and ruled that the Russian had broken, so Gardner went ahead 1–0. Chants of "USA!" began to ring through the hall. The three-time Olympic champion and nine-time world champion could not trouble the American. Five seconds from the end of time Kareline gave a resigned shake of the head, acknowledging his defeat. In nine minutes of wrestling, he had never got close to scoring.

The American farm boy had snatched the gold from Kareline. It was a sensation. Gardner said afterwards, "I have been an underdog every step of my life, but my philosophy has been never to quit. I cannot believe I have actually won ... I am a kid from Wyoming, the Lord has blessed me somehow." Dmitry Debelka of Belarus won the bronze medal, beating Israel's Juri Yevseychyc 1–0 after overtime.

Gardner carried the Stars and Stripes on a lap of honour around the mat area after his victory and his coach Dan Chandler described it as a "great day for American wrestling".

Kareline was gracious and sportsmanlike, shaking Gardner's hand. When invited by Gardner to stand on the gold medal platform he refused and remained on his silver stand in respect. Gardner would wear the gold medal, but the legend of Kareline would be difficult to beat.

Wrestling is one of the most ancient sports, dating back over 3000 years. Over the centuries many cultures developed indigenous styles of wrestling which have continued to the

present day. The first codification of the sport that we know of, with any certainty, came with the ancient Olympic Games and it spread through the Greek world, including its colonies. It has been included in every modern Olympic Games except in Paris in 1900.

The two disciplines of wrestling at the Olympic Games are Greco-Roman and freestyle. Greco-Roman is believed to resemble the style followed in classical Greece and Rome and in it a wrestler must use only the arms and upper body to attack or hold. In freestyle the competitor can also use his legs and hold his opponent above or below the waist. In Sydney the Olympic wrestling competition was open to men only.

The total number of competitors was 320, with 160 in each discipline, 20 in each event. There were eight weight categories: 45–54 kg, 58 kg, 63 kg, 69 kg, 76 kg, 85 kg, 97 kg and 130 kg.

Each competition began with an elimination system of three or four wrestlers in each pool, with the winners of a pool qualifying for the quarterfinals, semifinals and final by way of direct elimination. Wrestlers were paired off for each round according to the numerical order determined by the drawing of lots at the weigh-in.

Greco-Roman Competition

54 kg

In the 54 kg class there were wrestlers from 20 different countries. After the elimination pool, the quarterfinals and the semifinals, the gold medal match was contested by Korea's

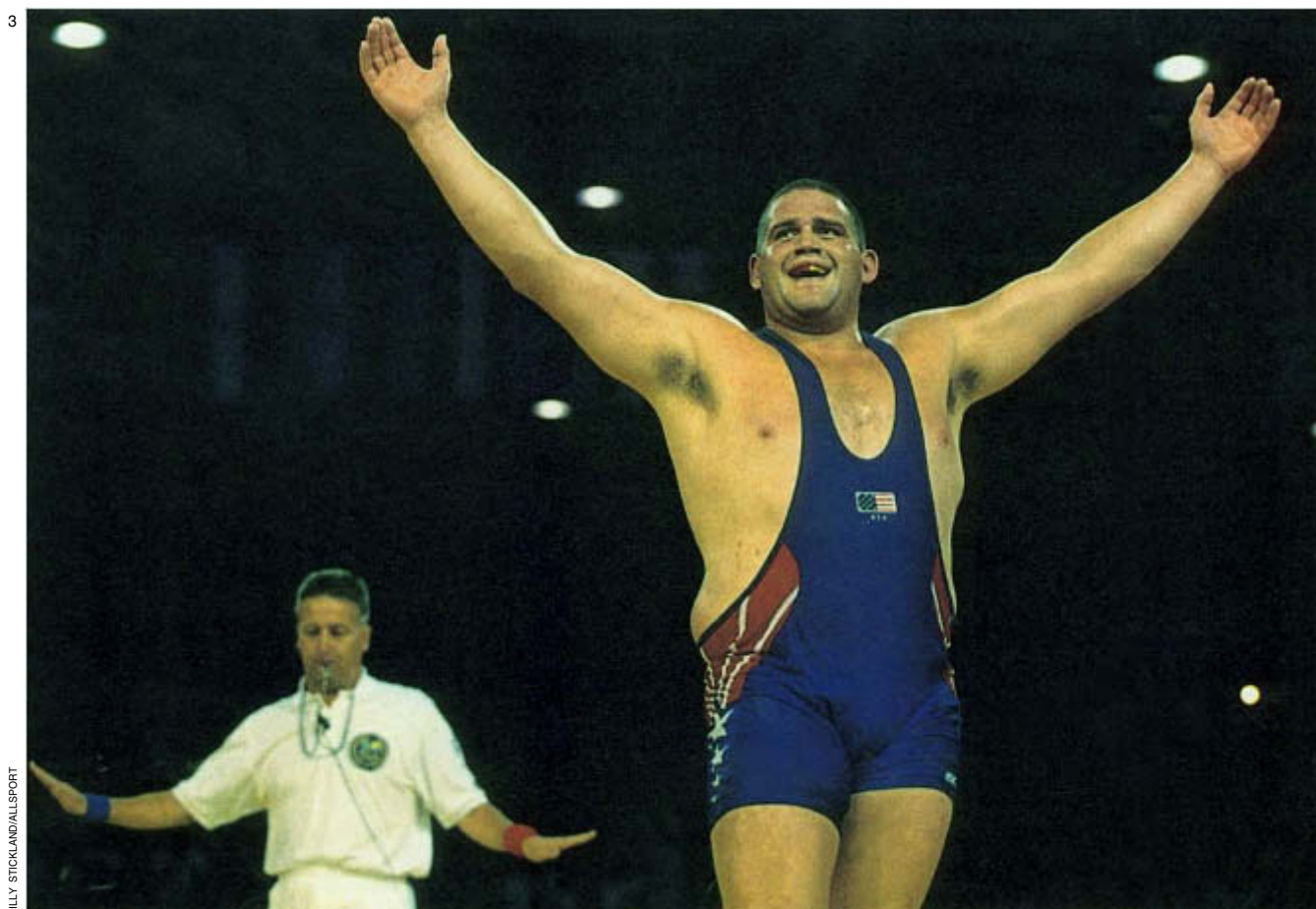
Wrestling
Volume Two
Chapter Five



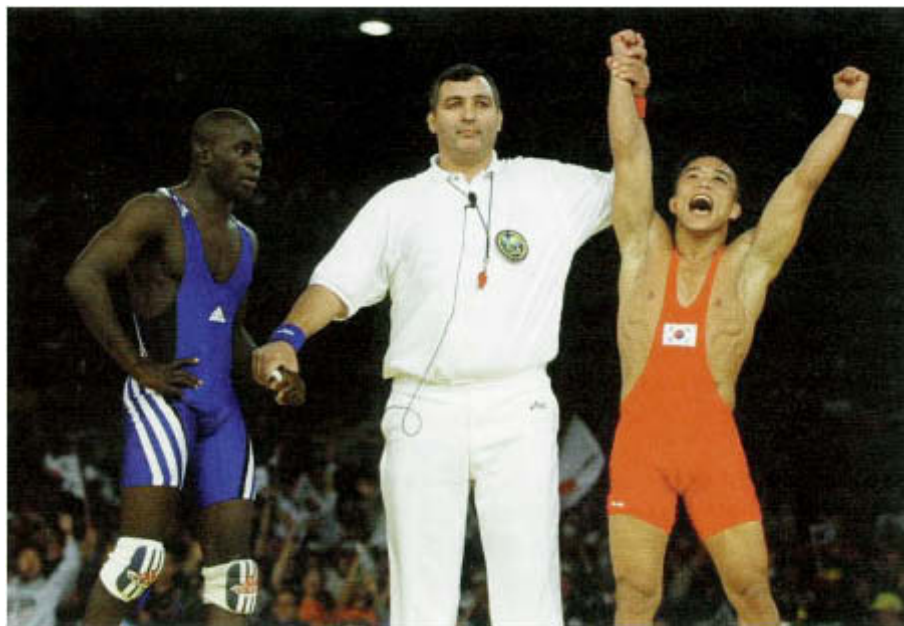
1. Sydney's wrestling competition was held in Halls 1 and 2 of the Exhibition Centre. Followed by an enthusiastic and vocal crowd, the venue was packed close to capacity during most sessions
2. Rulon Gardner of the USA struggles in a lock-up with Alexandre Kareline in the 130 kg Greco-Roman final
3. Gardner, a first-time Olympian, after staging the biggest upset in Sydney's wrestling competition, when he dethroned legendary and previously unbeaten Alexandre Kareline of the Russian Federation



BILLY STICKLAND/ALLSPORT 2



BILLY STICKLAND/ALLSPORT 3



Sim Kwon Ho, a former two-time world champion and Atlanta gold medallist, and the 1999 world champion from Cuba, Lazaro Rivas.

Rivas started slowly, Sim scoring eight points in the first three-minute period. After the mandatory 30 seconds rest Rivas attacked furiously, but Kim held on for what turned out to be a one-sided 8-0 victory.

Sim was delighted with his victory, wrapping the Korean flag around himself and waving furiously as he ran around the venue. On winning the silver medal Rivas said, "I have a message for the Cuban people – I'm sorry I couldn't get a gold medal."

In the bronze medal bout Kang Yong Gyun of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea won 7-0 against the Atlanta bronze medallist from the Ukraine, Andriy Kalashnikov. It was a rematch and a reversal of the result from their Atlanta meeting.

58 kg

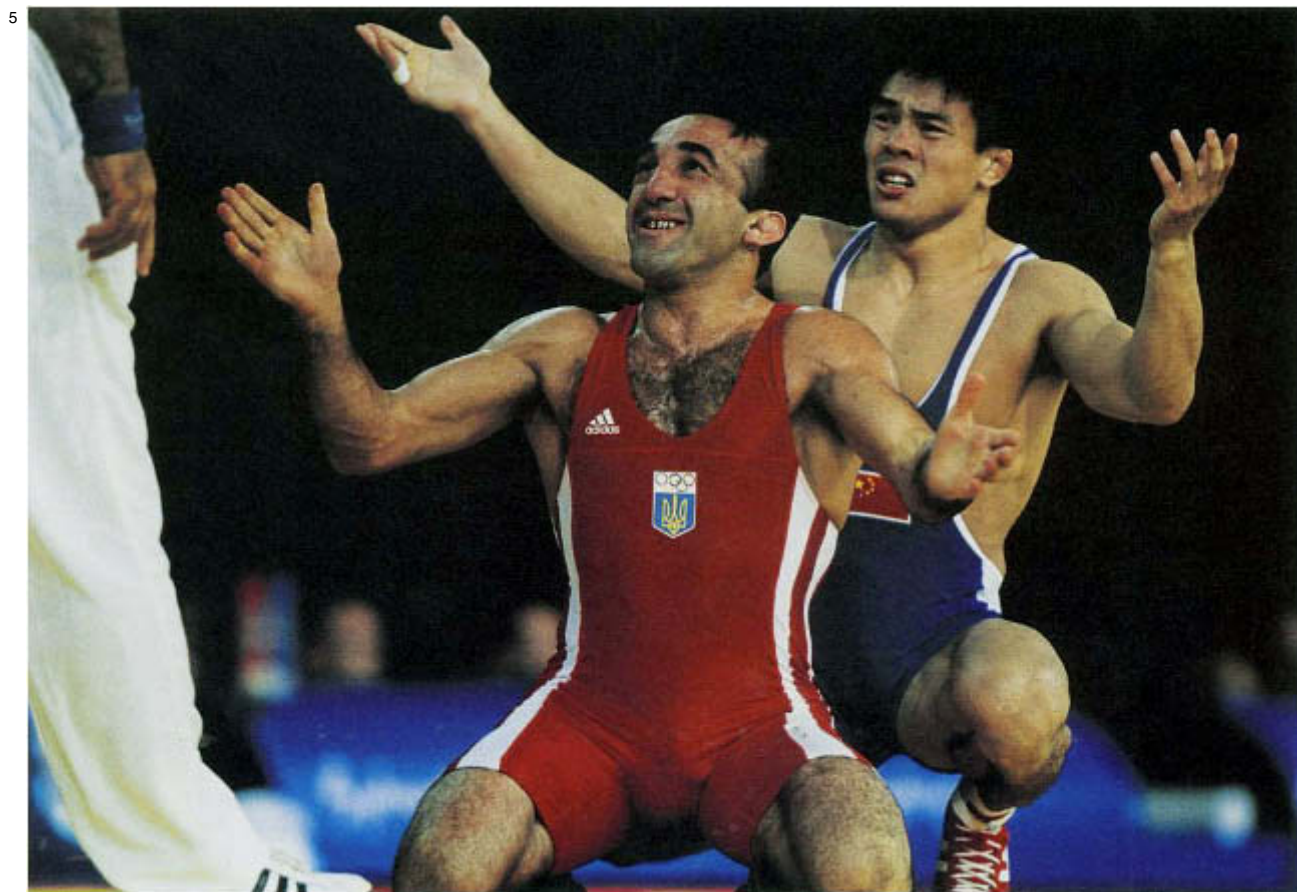
Korea was expected to be a front-runner in the 58 kg weight class, with the 1998 and 1999 world champion Kim In-Sub the clear favourite against Bulgaria's Atlanta 52 kg gold medallist, Armen Nazarian. In a stunning upset Kim was thrown twice, on the second occasion landing on his head, and was pinned when the score was 10-3 against him.

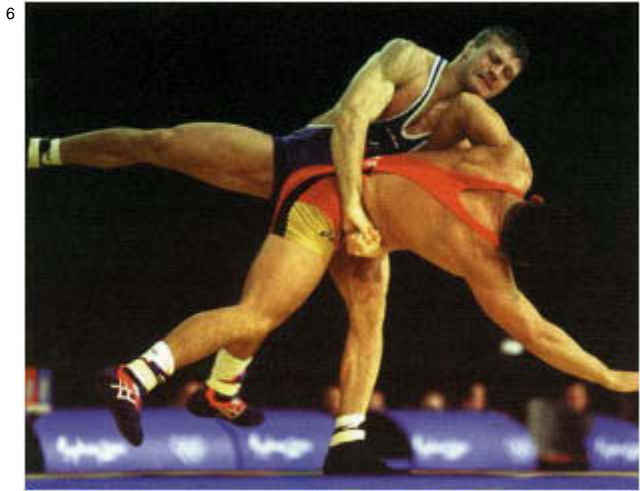
In the bronze medal bout it was China's Sheng Zetian, twice Olympic bronze medallist, versus Germany's Rifat Yildiz, the former world champion. At the first three-minute break the score was 0-0, and the second period started with the wrestlers in a clinch position. The score was only 2-0 after six minutes. In Olympic wrestling if a score of three is not reached by either athlete in regular time, three minutes overtime is added. In this case the score remained at 2-0 after overtime and Sheng was declared the winner. He promptly announced his retirement from Olympic competition.

63 kg

In the final of the 63 kg class, the Russian Federation's Varteres Samourgachev, attempting to secure his first international medal, was up against Cuba's Juan Luis Maren. It was 1-0 for the Russian at the end of the first period and in a very even contest it was still that score at the end of the second period. After overtime the score was 3-0, the Russian getting the gold medal and the Cuban the silver.

4. Sim Kwon Ho of Korea wins gold over Lazaro Rivas of Cuba in the final of the 54 kg competition
5. Oleksan Stepanyan of the Ukraine (left) and Sheng Zetian of China appeal to the referee during the 58 kg class round two
6. Opposite page: Alexei Glouchkov of Russia (left) throws Katsuhiko Nagata of Japan during the 69 kg semifinal
7. Opposite page: Mourat Kardanov of the Russian Federation (right) is declared points winner over the USA's Matt James Lindland in the final of the 76 kg Greco-Roman wrestling event
8. Opposite page: Kader Silla of Algeria takes on Lindland during the pool elimination. Silla would finish last in this class while Lindland moved on to win silver





SCOTT BARBOUR/ALLSPORT

Two other wrestlers endeavouring to achieve their first international medal, Akaki Chachua of Georgia and Beat Motzer of Switzerland, fought for the bronze. The match lasted only 1 minute 57 seconds before Motzer was pinned. Chachua was awarded the bronze.

69 kg

One of the most spectacular matches in the tournament occurred in the final of the 69 kg division as Cuba's 26-year-old Filiberto Azcuy, 74 kg Olympic champion in 1996, spectacularly defeated Asian Games champion Katsuhiko Nagata of Japan in 1 minute 44 seconds. He broke through the defensive wall of the Japanese policeman and with a series of lifts threw him to the ground. When the score reached 11-0 the bout was stopped on a superiority rule. Azcuy stated, after the contest, "I want to continue on to be world champion. I felt very well going into the competition and now I have a gold medal."

In the bronze medal match it was Estonia's Valeri Nikitin against the Russian Federation's Alexei Glouchkov. With the score 1-0 at the break, it was 5-0 after six minutes for the Russian. The bronze medallist said, "I was feeling good and strong. I expected to get better medals. The Olympic Games didn't go in my favour, but I'm happy."

76 kg

The final of the 76 kg weight division pitted the Russian Federation's Mourat Kardanov against Matt James Lindland of the USA. Lindland was originally not included in the US team after failing to qualify, but he took his case to the US Supreme Court and won the appeal. While it was 3-0 for Kardanov after the first period, the US wrestler kept attacking and seemed to have the better of it, but the score remained unchanged after the second session. Kardanov won the gold medal, and Lindland the silver. Lindland spoke of his brave battle, "I had him up in the air. He was trying hard to defend. I tried to go for the point, but just couldn't get it. That's the way the sport is. I can't make any excuses."

The bronze medal went to Finland's 1997 world champion Marko Yli-Hannuksela over Ukraine's David Manukyan. The Finn won 4-2 and in celebrating amused the crowd by throwing his coach on the mat.

85 kg

One of the traditional powers of wrestling, Turkey, was represented in the final by 1996 Olympic champion and two-time world champion in the 85 kg category, Hamza Yerlikaya. He was a clear favourite over Hungary's Sandor Istvan Bardosi. The bout ebbed and flowed, and was 3-3 at the finish.

The Turkish wrestler was awarded the gold on a judges' points decision. He said, "I am extremely happy. I am proud to have a gold medal for my country." Bardosi was more prosaic, "better to be second than third". The Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orban, was on hand to congratulate him. Third place went to Georgia's Mukhran Vakhlangadze, who won 4-0 over Norway's Fritz Aanes.

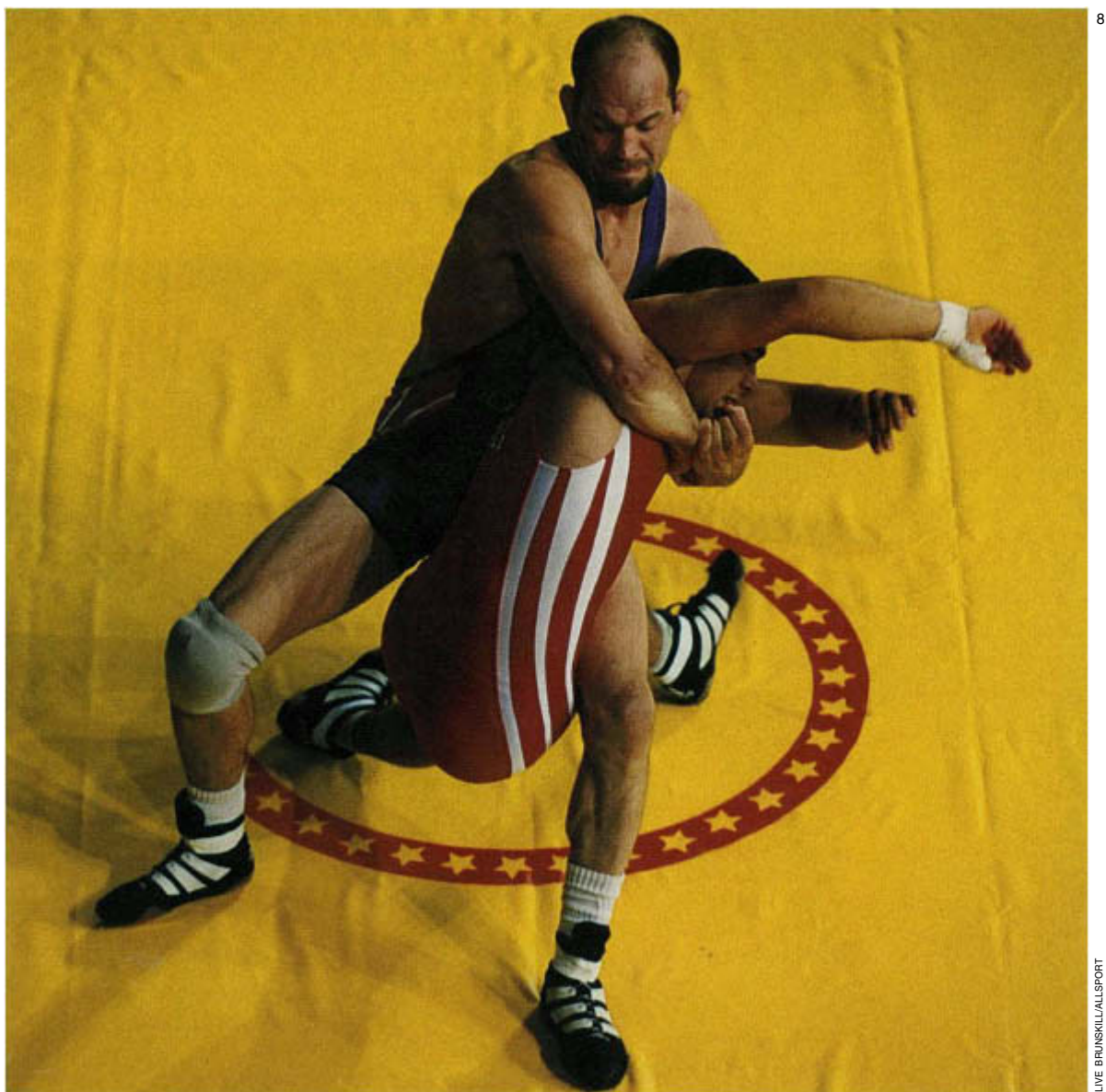
97 kg

In the 97 kg class Sweden's two-time world champion and 1996 bronze medallist, Mikael Ljungberg, went up against the Ukraine's Davyd Saldadze for the gold medal. The match was scoreless at the first interval and 2-1 after the second period, so overtime was called for. The decision after a hard-fought battle went to Sweden, with the score still stuck on 2-1.

Wrestling
Volume Two
Chapter Five



KIM JAE-HWAN/AFP



CLIVE BRUNSKILL/ALLSPORT

Wrestling
Volume Two
Chapter Five



It was Greece against the USA for the bronze and in yet another gruelling match that went into overtime, the US wrestler Garrett Lowney, a 20-year-old who had never wrestled internationally, prevailed over Greece's courageous Konstantinos Thanos.

Fifteen countries shared the medals in the Greco-Roman wrestling competition. The Russian Federation garnered four medals, the USA and Cuba three each and Korea two. The results signified a partial shift of power from Europe.

Freestyle Competition

54 kg

A tight and competitive battle emerged in the 54 kg final. The finalists were gold and silver medallists from the 1998 world championships, Samuel 'Sammie' Henson of the USA and Azerbaijan's Namig Abdullayev.

In the first few seconds of the bout, Abdullayev gained an advantage and took a one-point lead for a leg-lace attempt at Henson. In another leg-lace attempt, Abdullayev scored a further two points. The determined and aggressive US wrestler fought back to finish the first half 3-3. In spite of Henson dominating the second period, he lost by one point, 4-3. Abdullayev was visibly elated, while Henson was totally distraught and ran from the floor to the competitors' room.

In the bronze medal match, the Greek wrestler Amiran Karntanov won 5-4 over German Kontoev of Belarus, scoring the winning point in the final two seconds.

58 kg

The gold medal bout in the 58 kg category was between the Islamic Republic of Iran's Alireza Dabir, the 1998 world champion, and Ukraine's Yevgen Buslovych. Dabir led 2-0 in the first period and was the 3-0 winner at the end of the final period. When the bout ended people rushed on to the mat and the crowd went berserk. The hundreds of Iranians in the audience were ecstatic.

The bronze medal pitted two-time world champion Terry Brands of the USA against Uzbekistan's Damir Zakhartdinov. It was 2-1 in the first period to Brands, who progressed to a 3-2 victory.

63 kg

Another former world champion, Serafim Barzakov of Bulgaria, wrestled the Russian Federation's Mourad Oumakhanov in the 63 kg weight class. The Russian won a hard-fought and close match 3-2. In the bronze medal match, Korea's Jang Jae Sung was far superior to the Islamic Republic of Iran's Mohammad Taleai, winning 12-2.

69 kg

One of the most outstanding performances was given in the 69 kg class by Canada's Daniel Igali, the 1999 world champion. Although it was 4-4 at the end of the first period, Igali won over courageous Russian Federation athlete Arsen Gitinov 7-4. The bronze medal was awarded to the aggressive US wrestler Lincoln McClravy, who decisively beat Sergei Demchenko of Belarus 3-1.



KIM JAE-HWAN/AFP

9. Namig Abdullayev of Azerbaijan (left) and Greece's Amiran Karntanov compete in the 54 kg freestyle event. Abdullayev won a 5-3 points decision in this match and went on to win the final over Samuel Hansen of the USA

10. Terry Brands of the USA (left) and Abil Ibragimov of Kazakhstan face to face during the 58 kg freestyle elimination round



ROSS KINNIRDALLSPORT

11



DARREN MCMAHALLSPORT

76 kg

Germany's Alexander Leipold was up against the USA's Brandon Slay in the 76 kg class. After a scoreless first period, Leipold took control and showed superb strength and speed to win 4–0. It was a welcome victory, as it was Germany's first Olympic freestyle gold medal in 40 years. Leipold, the 1994 world champion, who had won medals in all the big international events with the exception of the Olympic Games, was overjoyed and did a series of cartwheels, somersaults and backflips, to the delight of the crowd. Slay, who had been penalised by the referee three times, was clearly disappointed with the result.

85 kg

In the 85 kg weight category the Russian Federation's Adam Saitiev outgunned Cuba's 23-year-old Yoel Romero. The Cuban was the 1999 world champion at this weight, while Saitiev had won the 76 kg division at the same world championships. It was a bout of contrasting styles, but Saitiev proved the quicker and emerged a surprise victor.

The bronze medal outcome was also somewhat unexpected as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's Mogamed Ibragimov beat his more favoured opponent, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Amirreza Khadem Azghadi. The match went into overtime before Ibragimov scored a 4–1 victory.

97 kg

The 97 kg gold medal was fought out between the Russian Federation's Saghid Mourtasaliyev and Kazakhstan's Islam Bairamukov. It was a 6–0 victory for Mourtasaliyev. The bronze medal went to Georgia's Eldar Kurtanidze, a 4–1 winner over Poland's Marek Garmulewicz.

130 kg

The 130 kg class always attracts great spectator interest as the giants of the sport collide, and in Sydney their interest was well rewarded. The finalists were Artur Taymazov of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation's David Moussoulbes, who had been the more successful in the international arena. In an absorbing match, Moussoulbes won 5–2. It was the sixth gold medal for the Russian Federation in the two wrestling competitions.

The bronze medal clash was fascinating, as no score was recorded by either wrestler, up to and including overtime. The combatants were Alexis Rodriguez of Cuba and Abbas Jadidi of the Islamic Republic of Iran. They were evenly matched, but Rodriguez was awarded the victory on points.

In the Greco-Roman competition medals were spread across 15 nations. The Russian Federation was the leading nation, winning a total of four medals with two gold, one silver and one bronze. Closely following was Cuba and then the USA.

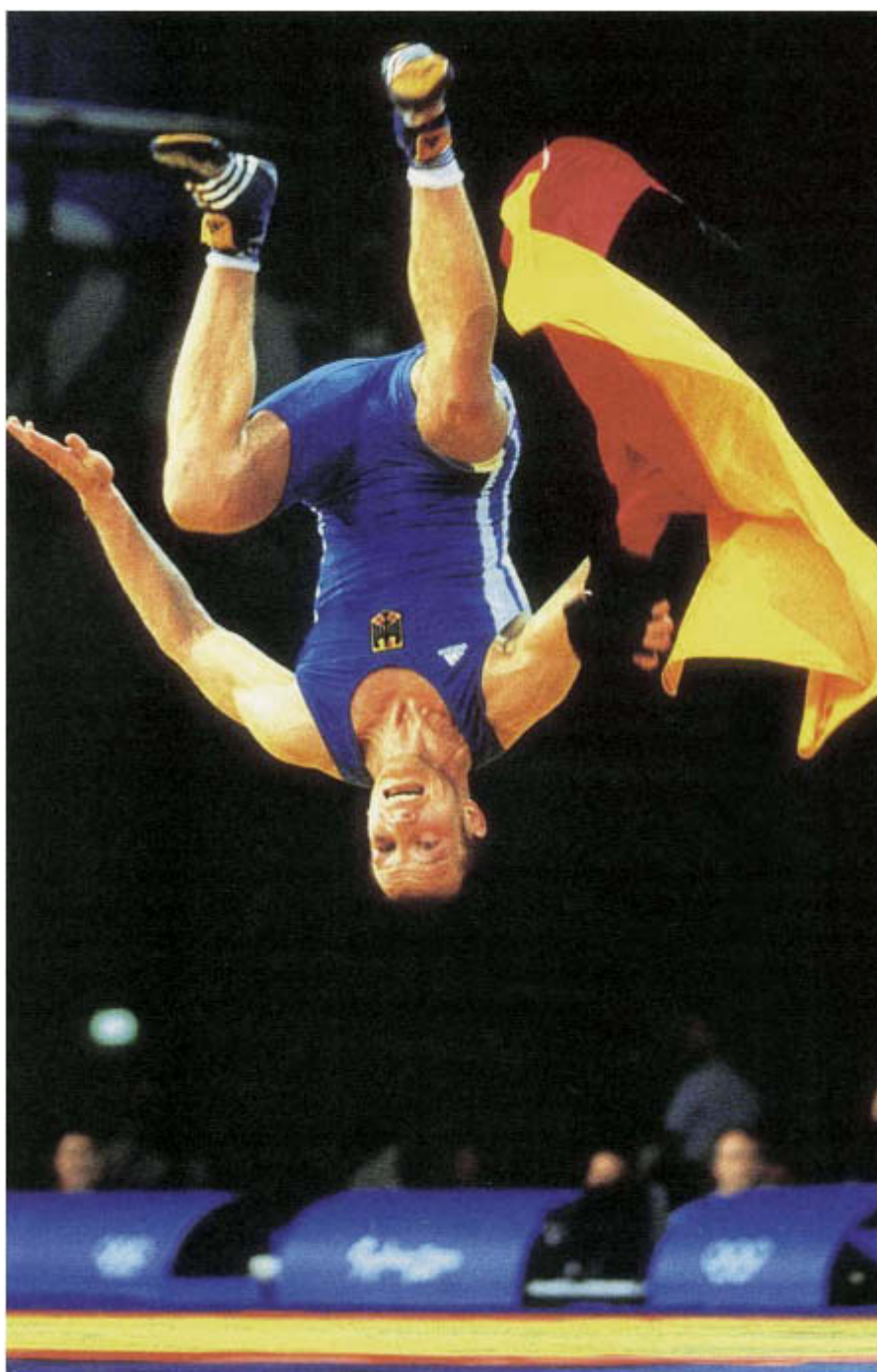
In freestyle the Russian Federation was again clearly the dominant nation, winning five medals, including four gold and one silver. The medals were again spread across 15 nations, with Azerbaijan, Canada, Germany and the Islamic Republic of Iran winning one gold medal each. While the USA won two silver and two bronze, it was the first Olympic Games since 1968 that the USA had failed to win a gold medal in freestyle wrestling.

Wrestling
Volume Two
Chapter Five



11. Brandon Slay of the USA is thrown to the ground by Russia's Bouvaissa Saitiev in a preliminary 76 kg freestyle match

12. Germany's Alexander Leipold celebrates his win over Slay in the 76 kg freestyle final. Slay was later awarded the gold medal, after Leipold was disqualified due to positive drug tests



DOUG PENNINGER/ALLSPORT

12





6

THE CULTURAL OLYMPIAD





OLYMPIC ARTS FESTIVALS

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was a comprehensive and culturally significant four-year program that included the presentation of four Olympic Arts Festivals, each with a different theme and emphasis.

In general, the role of the Olympic Cultural Programs is to highlight the shared values of sport and the arts in terms of excellence, endeavour and achievement; to promote the arts and culture of the host city and the host nation while embracing an international cultural dimension; and to provide a dynamic and high profile context for promoting Olympism and the Olympic Games.

"Culture is intrinsic to Olympism. Without a lively, visible cultural program that reflects the spirit of the host country, the Olympic Games would be incomplete." So said IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch in his Foreword to the brochure published for the 1998 Olympic Arts Festival, *A Sea Change*.

Among the primary objectives of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival was to give expression to Australia's place in the world as it approached the 21st century. It sought to define who Australians are and to showcase the physical qualities of the Australian environment and its profound influence on our culture and the arts. It presented Australia's artistic and cultural achievements in a program that highlighted their excellence and uniqueness; celebrated Australia's indigenous heritage and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, as well as Australia's modern-day multicultural diversity. The Sydney 2000 Games thus supported the vision of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who saw the Olympic Games as a true celebration of both sport and culture.

An Artistic Director was appointed for each festival. This ensured that the programs for the festivals were selected by highly experienced and well-regarded arts professionals, thus creating a strong artistic rationale and integrity for the festival programs while distancing the artistic selection from a committee decision-making process and any potential or perceived conflict of interest within SOCOG.

Rhoda Roberts, the Artistic Director for 1997's *The Festival of the Dreaming*, is an indigenous Australian with considerable experience as a theatre performer, writer and director; as a film director and actor; and in arts broadcasting and presentation. Andrea Stretton, the Artistic Director of the 1998 *A Sea Change* and 1999 *Reaching the World* festivals, had extensive experience in Australian arts, particularly literature, and also in arts broadcasting. Leo Schofield, Artistic Director of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival, had an international profile as the artistic director of the Melbourne and Sydney International Art Festivals, as an arts entrepreneur, as a journalist and as a writer on the arts, architecture and design.

Appointed at least two years before their respective festivals, the Artistic Directors were responsible for developing the concepts and parameters for their programs, initiating projects and sourcing proposals, liaising with artists and arts companies and making the final selection of all program content.

An important aspect of the four-year Festival program was a commitment to facilitate longer-term benefits and legacies for Australian artists and arts companies. These legacies included the commissioning of a number of new works, including plays, musical works, dance works, fine art print portfolios, publications and anthologies. Other significant initiatives included the presentation throughout the cultural program of major projects by Australian indigenous and Pacific Islander artists and arts companies, the introduction of important audience development and access activities, including sign-interpreted and audio-described performances, and campaigns to reach as many culturally diverse audiences as was possible, both within Australia and overseas.

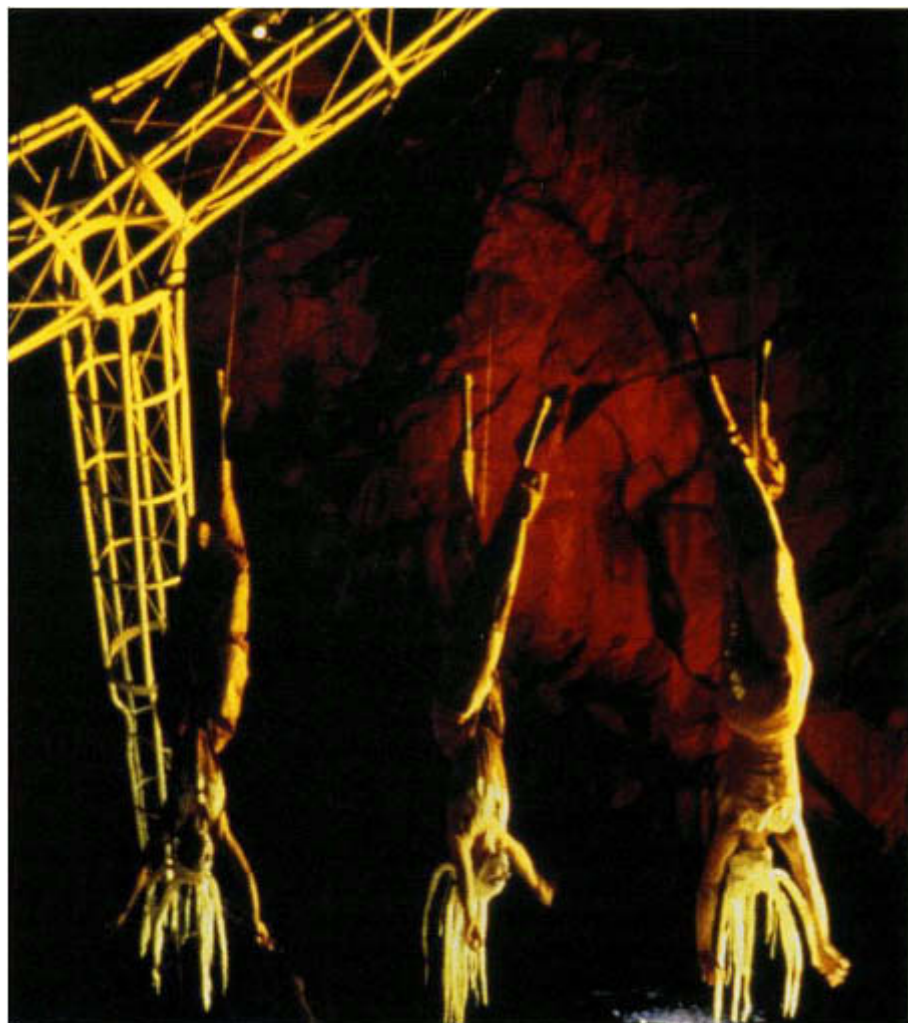
The Festival of the Dreaming 15 September – 5 October 1997

This landmark festival took place in Sydney and gave voice to more than 700 indigenous artists from Australia and around the world, showing how these most ancient of cultures are being expressed today. The Festival of the Dreaming uncovered a wealth of new talent, engendered greater awareness of Australia's own indigenous arts and artists and was a high point of Sydney's Olympic celebrations.

Olympic Arts Festivals Volume Two Chapter Six



1. *The Festival of the Dreaming opens at the Opera House in September 1997 with a traditional smoking and cleansing ceremony*
2. *The first Festival provided a platform to celebrate the world's indigenous cultures*
3. *The Marrugeko Company performs Mimi, a spectacular outdoor performance*



Olympic Arts Festivals
Volume Two
Chapter Six



The Festival of the Dreaming was an affirmation of indigenous identity and culture. It drew on the many threads of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and of other first nations peoples from around the world. Australia's Aboriginal groups are divided into roughly 600 clans, speaking an estimated 250 languages with between 500 and 600 dialects. To reflect this diversity of indigenous cultures participants were, wherever possible, identified by their clan, language or nation name.

Each state and territory of Australia was represented, with works from urban, remote and rural areas. Indigenous artists from New Zealand, Canada, Greenland, the USA, Korea and the countries of Oceania also appeared. The Festival highlighted the similarities between the experiences of the first nations peoples, with stories of stolen children, invasion, colonisation and dispossession proving common themes.

There were many firsts associated with the Festival. It was the first contemporary indigenous festival of its size and kind in Australia. Many of the international companies had never previously toured the region. Bangarra Dance Theatre was the first Aboriginal company to have a season at the Sydney Opera House and The Festival of the Dreaming was the first international Australian festival to employ a female artistic director.

The challenge was to show the variety, the optimism, the excitement and the humour in indigenous cultures that had

not been seen before by the broader public through the many genres which make up indigenous arts, including story telling, ceremonies, dance, theatre, literature, film, visual arts, multimedia and new technologies. The Festival was accessible because many performances extended into different areas around greater Sydney and a number of events were free, which encouraged maximum participation by families, youth and the general public.

The unique quality of the Festival owed much to the implementation and process of indigenous authorship and control. Exciting collaborations born from artistic freedom extended across all art forms and broke new ground, reflecting the generosity of spirit engendered by the Festival.

The Festival of the Dreaming established a number of historical and groundbreaking legacies. Many productions commissioned by the Olympic Arts Festivals, including those from the highly successful series of one-woman shows, 'Wimmin's Business', have since gone on to tour the rest of Australia.

The Festival of the Dreaming gave the nation a song cycle with a message of collaboration between white and black, of Reconciliation and of the landscape of Australia. The Olympic Arts Festival showed that Australia's indigenous culture is fresh, contemporary and, above all, relevant as we head into the new millennium.

Highlights of the Festival included:

The Awakening Ceremony: a traditional smoking and cleansing ceremony held on the forecourt of the Sydney Opera House

Fish: a commission of the Bangarra Dance Theatre, Australia's most significant indigenous contemporary dance company

Mimi: an outdoor spectacular featuring stilt walkers and dancers from both the Stalker Theatre Company and the Marrugeku Company of the central desert area of Australia

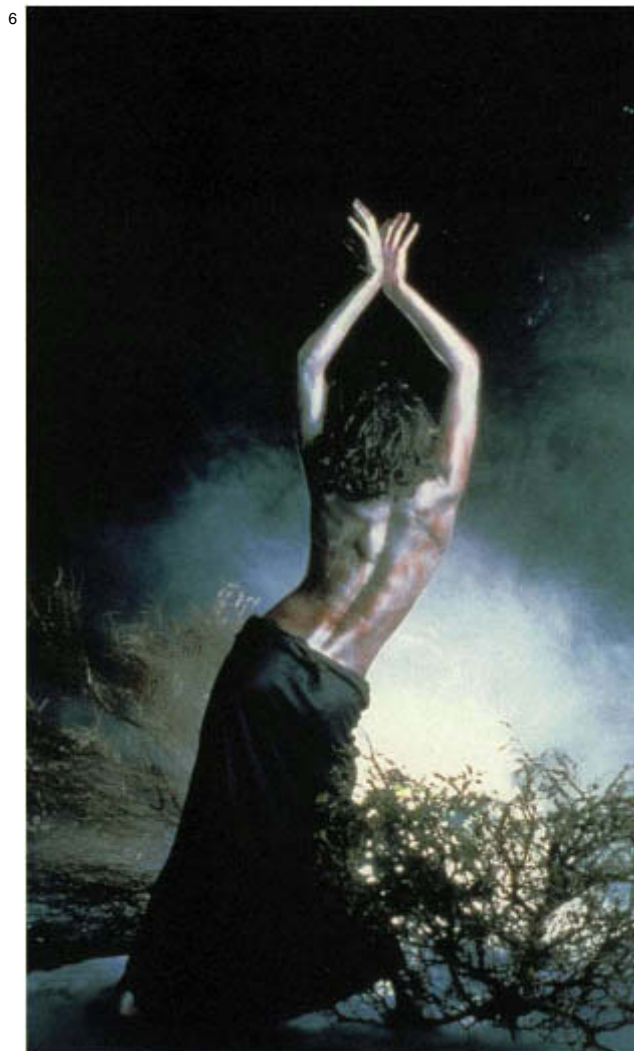
Ngawarra: a sand painting at the Art Gallery of New South Wales prepared via satellite, with the elders of the Warlpiri community in Northern Australia instructing the young artists in the gallery

Offshore: On Site: an artists' camp at the Casula Powerhouse Art Centre featuring visual and decorative artists from New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, Samoa, Canada and the USA

Ngundalehla Godotgai: a production of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, performed in the Bunjalung dialect of the New South Wales Northern Rivers District.

The impact of the Festival of the Dreaming went well beyond entertainment, communicating very significant messages about indigenous cultures, particularly Aboriginal cultures, for many in the audiences.

It aroused a far deeper understanding of Aboriginal cultures and the impact of European settlement than the political campaigns and slogans of recent decades could ever achieve.



4. A Tiwi Ceremony is on exhibit at the Australian National Maritime Museum. The art of painting for ceremony has been practiced for thousands of years and is an evolving expression of culture on the Tiwi Islands
5. Korean dancers perform in Chang Mu, based on indigenous Korean dance styles choreographed by Kim MaeJo
6. Fish, the highly acclaimed production by the Bangarra Dance Theatre showcases songs and dances which demonstrate the ongoing energy and evolution of Aboriginal and Island cultures

The Artistic Director said of the Festival's impact, "We achieved what I always intended to achieve, which was to change the stereotypes. This is a tip of the iceberg. People got a taste of what indigenous works are about in the 90s. It was unique and it was very unknown. The relationships that have been established have been nurtured during this process."

"We've had families who came down for the Awakening Ceremony who have never been to the Opera House in their lives before and have come back every weekend, black and white. That's a real achievement because that icon that sits on the harbour is for everyone and should not be perceived as an elitist venue."

A Sea Change
30 April 1998 – January 1999

The Cultural Program of the Olympic Games provides an opportunity to show the world the characteristics of the host nation. This was a particular benefit for Australia, a country little known to the rest of the world other than by a few stereotypes and icons. The nation is in fact comprised of many communities recently arrived from countries around the world, juxtaposed with an ancient and evolving community of indigenous Australians.

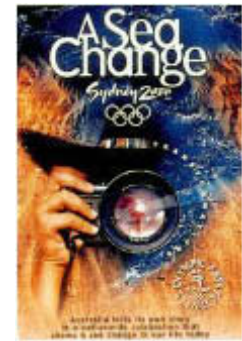
During the twentieth century, and particularly in the last few decades, Australia has emerged as a confident nation; people have migrated here from nearly every part of the world, making it one of the most multicultural societies anywhere. The patterns of immigration have varied around the country, which means that each community has unique attributes that influences its creative interests and expression.

To document and promote these transformations, A Sea Change, held over a nine-month period, spanned an enormous range of art forms, regions and cultures. It encompassed music, theatre, the visual arts, debating, history, and youth and education events, reaching across the country from tropical Townsville to the pearling community of Broome and to the wild and beautiful landscape of the Tasman Peninsula.

Festival Organisers collaborated closely with communities to develop and assist projects that they felt best expressed their creative endeavours, and eventually involved 122 events and 60 communities.

A Sea Change embraced the arts across Australia, selecting those events that best reflected their place and time and, through this, the rich cultural and geographic diversity of the nation.

Olympic Arts Festivals
 Volume Two
 Chapter Six



7

7. Almost 100 cultural events took place nationwide during A Sea Change
 8. Sculpture by the Sea displayed 300 sculptures around Australia's coastline



8



9



or in some way enhancing its development. Other events independently planned by organisations or artists were also promoted as part of the Festival. In some cases, such as the Australian National Maritime Museum's Tears, Fears and Cheers' exhibition, the project was planned to reflect the themes of the Festival, while other projects were planned independently of the Festival yet suited its theme. In every case, the project was assessed on artistic and regional suitability, and whether timing enabled it to be included.

Highlights of the Festival included:

Lighthouse Concerts: a series of free concerts held in coastal locations around Australia featuring local artists. Locations included the Darwin Peninsula, Cape Otway in Victoria, Port Adelaide, Low Head in Tasmania and Point Danger in Queensland

Sculpture by the Sea: a series of free temporary sculpture trails in coastal locations curated by local personnel and featuring local and interstate artists. Locations included Noosa Heads in Queensland, Bondi Beach in New South Wales, Albany in Western Australia, Darwin Peninsula in the Northern Territory and Port Arthur and Roaring Beach in Tasmania

Sydney Harbour and David Moore: 50 Years of Photography: an exhibition which chronicles our famous harbour city by one of our most respected photographers

Alhalkere – Paintings from Utopia: a major retrospective of the works of the late Emily Kame Kngwarreye, a leading contemporary Australian indigenous artist

Tears, Fears and Cheers: an exhibition at the Australian National Maritime Museum detailing the social impact of migration on post-war Australia

10



To help reach this national overview, the festival organisers held a series of forums across Australia in late 1997. In many cases, there was assistance from the arts ministries of the various states and territories.

The forums were an opportunity for interested artists and companies to learn ways in which to become involved in A Sea Change.

Companies and artists became involved at three different levels. In some cases, the Olympic Arts Festivals created and funded entire events. At the next level the Festival provided a financial contribution, either enabling the event to go ahead

11



9. Ntange Dreaming, is an artwork by acclaimed indigenous artist Emily Kame Kngwarreye.

10. Cambell Robertson-Swan poses with his winning sculpture in Bondi. Sculpture by the Sea provided a unique national forum for Australia's leading and emerging sculptors

11. A Pacific cultural village is on display at Mindi Beach during the Festival of Darwin

Between the Oceans: a cultural village constructed in Darwin by local communities, each dwelling representing the culture and traditions of the group

The Painted Coast: an exhibition at the Art Gallery of South Australia showing the diversity and range of expressions of coastal landscape painting in Australia

A Sea Change: Australian Writing and Photography: an anthology of new Australian writing and photography, commissioned by the Festival and distributed free to schools around Australia.

Reaching the World December 1998 - January 2000

The 1999 Olympic Arts Festival, Reaching the World, took place in locations around the world. The Festival took the opportunity to showcase Australian culture in the five continents represented by the Olympic rings. The program encompassed many forms: the performing arts in dance, theatre and music; literature, film, design and architecture; and a broad range of visual arts including photography, painting and sculpture. In addition, a special publication, *Australia on Show*, was produced. This was an in-depth catalogue of existing Australian broadcast material that had been made available to all Olympic broadcast rights holders to encourage them to program Australian material in advance of the Games.

Highlights of the Festival included:

Our Sporting Life: a travelling photographic exhibition which chronicled recent Australian achievement in sport - seen in the USA, Europe and Asia

Cloudstreet: a landmark work of Australian theatre, based on the novel by Tim Winton, performed in London, Zurich and Dublin

Nevesinjska 17: a play about an Australian-born Croat which was performed in Zagreb, Croatia

En Plein Art: a sculpture workshop and installation involving artists from Australia and around the Pacific at Le Centre Culturel Tjijbaou, New Caledonia

Latin American Festival of Australian Film: a festival of the greatest of recent Australian films with subtitles in Portuguese

New Worlds from Old: an exhibition in Washington, DC highlighting the differences and similarities between Australian and American landscape painting of the nineteenth century

Spirit Country: a unique collection of contemporary Australian indigenous works was bequeathed by the Gantner Myer Foundation to the California Palace of the Legion of Honor as a part of the festival

Sydney 2000 Olympic Design of the new Millennium: an exhibition detailing the models, photographs, plans and urban design initiatives of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was held at the Royal Institute of British Architects in London

Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival 18 August - 1 October 2000

For Sydney's final Olympic Arts Festival, Leo Schofield, the Artistic Director, invited artists from Australia and around the world to contribute to a golden moment in the life of our city.

Almost 400 cultural events involving 4000 artists took place around the Harbour City over a six-week period, including seven large-scale spectacles and special events, five operas, eight dance projects, 13 music projects, five theatre projects, 50 exhibitions and two film festivals.

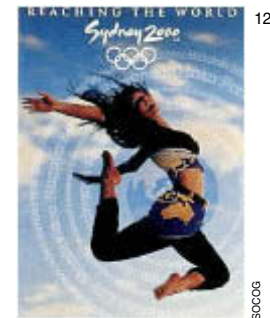
More than 260 000 people attended performing arts events during this Festival, and in excess of 300 000 people attended exhibitions in the Visual Arts Program.

Planning

Invitations were issued to the major arts organisations to work with Sydney 2000 on ideas and projects that would provide a creative opportunity for the company or artist, and at the same time assist the overarching aim to demonstrate the breadth and diversity of Australian culture.

Each Olympic Arts Festival had specific challenges and expectations. The primary aim was to present the official cultural program for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. With this came an expectation of an examination of the nexus between sport and art. There was also an expectation that the Festivals would showcase the culture of the host country - something that would have been a priority for the organisers in any case.

Olympic Arts Festivals
Volume Two
Chapter Six



12. *Reaching the World* celebrated Australian culture on a global scale with 70 Australian companies and artists touring 150 cities in 50 countries
13. Walter Gomes paints his Big Picture at the Spiral Studio as part of the Festival of Perth

13



14



MATT TURNER/ALLSPORT

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival organisers worked with every major gallery, museum and performing arts company in Sydney to assemble a program that delivered a truly Sydney feel and at the same time reinforced an Australian character. There was also some notable international representation. There had been considerable debate both within and without the Festival about the role of international artists. In the end, while the Olympic Arts Festival had over 70 per cent Australian content, the organisers' view was that, like the Games itself, the Festival should be a celebration of many nations of the world.

Event scheduling was difficult in the early planning stages as the Festival was sharing the bill with the largest event in the world – the Olympic Games itself. The greatest lessons learned from previous Games were to concentrate activity in the downtown area, to begin before the Games, and to make the Games-time presentations a series of popular fare for Games attendees. This is quite a different focus or set of circumstances to a regular festival and one that proved successful, despite a number of radical changes along the way.

15



JIM ALCOORN/NEWSPIX

Festival content

The Festival officially commenced on 18 August 2000 with a spectacular event on a grand scale – *Tubowgule*, a three-part indigenous welcoming and cleansing ritual. The event began at dawn at La Perouse, a beach on Botany Bay, a location that has significance for both indigenous and Anglo-Celtic Australians. It continued at midday in the Royal Botanic Gardens and concluded with a large free performance on the forecourt of the Sydney Opera House that featured dancers and songmen. The following night Sydney Olympic Park was host to *Symphony at the SuperDome*, a performance of Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*, the *Symphony of a Thousand*, which featured 1000 performers including the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and soloists and choirs from around the world. More than 13 000 people came to hear them.

One of the highest profile moments in the Festival came on the night of 14 September, eve of the Opening Ceremony. After the Olympic torch was carried around the perimeter of the Sydney Opera House, two gala concerts were held to mark the occasion. In the Opera Theatre, Opera Australia and The Australian Ballet presented major artists from the worlds of opera and ballet, including Yvonne Kenny, Simone Young and Sylvie Guillem. In the Concert Hall, Andrea Bocelli and Sumi Jo performed with the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra in a spectacular concert.

Other orchestral events included performances by the Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala under the baton of Maestro Riccardo Muti, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Australian Youth Orchestra and the Asian Youth Orchestra. The Sydney Symphony Orchestra performed Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* in concert and also presented the virtuoso violinist Maxim Vengerov. The festival also presented the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra with the Tainui artists: Deborah Wai-Kapohe, Jonathan Lemalu, Evelyn Glennie; and Sir Edmund Hillary. Sir Edmund was the narrator for the presentation of Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Sinfonia Antartica*, which was

16



MICHAEL PAYNE/SCOG

14. The Sydney 2000 Arts Festival is officially launched with *Tubowgule*, or The Meeting of the Waters at Congwong Beach, the site of the first contact between Europeans and Aboriginals
 15. The Kayimai people pay respect to their ancestors in a noon dance ceremony at the Botanic Gardens
 16. At dusk various saltwater clans gather at the forecourt of the Sydney Opera House. These ceremonies complete a cycle which began with the Awakening Ceremony of the 1997 Festival of the Dreaming

accompanied by film showing the terrain and character of this amazing subcontinent.

During the entire Festival the sails of the Sydney Opera House were illuminated each night in a different lighting treatment, designed by Marc Newson and inspired by the elements of fire, water, air and earth.

Opera Australia presented a number of operas as a part of the Festival, including *Capriccio*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Don Giovanni*, *La Traviata* and *Tosca*. These productions featured Australian artists including Simone Young, Yvonne Kenny and Jeffery Black.

Theatre also featured heavily in the Festival. The Sydney Theatre Company presented John Webster's *The White Devil*, directed by Gale Edwards. Company B Belvoir opened a cheeky production of Beaumarchais' *The Marriage of Figaro*. The Bell Shakespeare Company presented a production of *Troilus and Cressida* directed by Michael Bogdanov.

Youth theatre was represented by: the Australian Theatre for Young People who performed *Aristophanes' Birds*, the National Institute of Dramatic Art which presented, Barrie Kosky's *There's No Need to Wake Up* and The Flying Fruit Fly Circus who performed *Fusion* in collaboration with the Shanghai Circus School.

The dance program was one of the Festival's largest components and most notably represented international companies. These included Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch from Germany, Bill T Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company from the USA, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre from Taiwan, DV8 Physical Theatre from Great Britain and the prima ballerina Sylvie Guillem from France who performed with The Australian Ballet.

Other Australian companies included Bangarra Dance Theatre, performing the newly commissioned work *Skin*, and the Sydney Dance Company, performing a new commission entitled *Mythologia*.

Film was represented in the festival by Japanime – a first-time retrospective of Japanese animation – supported by the government of Japan, and SunScreen, a celebration of Australian cinema. This event comprised film screenings, seminars, forums and tours at a number of locations around the downtown area of the city.

The largest single event of the festival was Hemispheres – a two-day music festival held in Sydney's Centennial Park. The event featured blues, rock, funk, hip-hop, world fusion and the latest DJ mixes. Two outdoor stages and a big top were erected in the park and the event attracted many thousands of people.

The Games-time period of the Festival concentrated on activity within the Sydney Opera House. This had been a strategy in Festival planning from the earliest moment to capitalise on the extraordinary popularity of this incredible structure. The Opera House contains five venues – the Concert Hall, the Opera Theatre, the Drama Theatre, the Playhouse and The Studio – each catering to quite different styles of presentation. The Opera Theatre was home to both The Australian Ballet and



MICHAEL RAYNERS/COG

Opera Australia over this period while the Concert Hall featured a wide range of artists and ensembles, including the George Shearing Trio, Ute Lemper, Barbara Cook, David Campbell and Juan de Marcos' Afro-Cuban All Stars.

Visual Arts Program

The exhibitions that comprised the Visual Arts Program were the result of negotiation and discussion with a range of institutions and private galleries. Described as "a banquet of the visual arts" by Leo Schofield, the Program was the bedrock on which the Festival was built, with 48 exhibitions, nine of them international, showcasing literally hundreds of artists. While some elements of the Performing Arts Program occupied only one or two nights, most of the exhibitions ran for the entire 75 days of the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games.

The Program had strong Australian and regional accents – indigenous culture, Australia's place in the Pacific, the artistic and social influence of Sydney Harbour, sport and the Olympic Games, and our strong maritime history, were all present as influences. There was particular emphasis on the contemporary and the urban.

The Art Gallery of New South Wales hosted 'Papunya Tula', the first comprehensive exhibition to trace the Western Desert Papunya Tula indigenous art movement, 'Australian Icons', a



MICHAEL RAYNERS/COG



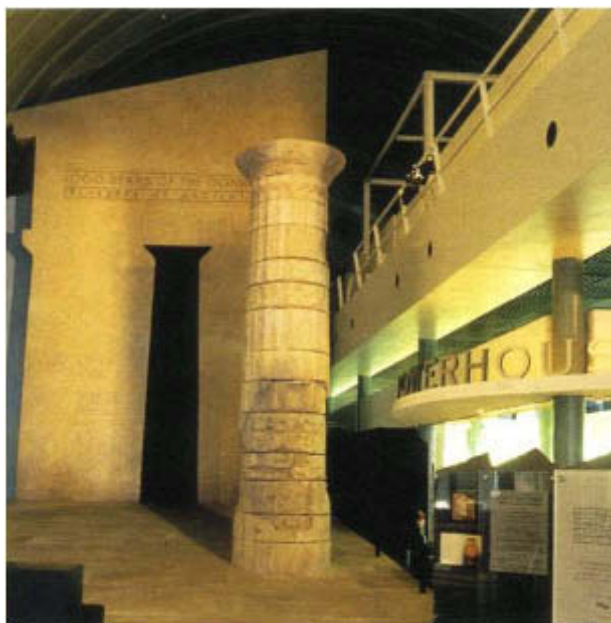
MICHAEL RAYNERS/COG

17. The Sydney Dance Company's *Mythologia* enraptured audiences during the Olympic Arts Festival
18. Members of the Australian Theatre for Young People in their energetic performance of *Bird* at the Opera House
19. American pianist Robert Levin plays Mozart with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Olympic Arts Festivals
Volume Two
Chapter Six



20



MARINCO KOJIC/POWERHOUSE MUSEUM

retrospective of 20 of our major artists and 'The Dead Sea Scrolls', an exhibition of the most controversial archaeological discovery of the 20th century.

The Museum of Contemporary Art contributed two exhibitions. 'Sporting Life' explored the relationship between sport and art. 'Urban Dingo – The Art of Lin Onus 1948-1996', was a major retrospective of work created by the urban Aboriginal artist described as a "cultural terrorist of gentle irreverence".

The Museum of Sydney offered two exhibitions: 'Sydneyiders', a photographic commission by Lorrie Graham, and 'Sydney

Harbour', which explored our waterways through art, architecture, design, literature, film and fantasy.

Sydney College of the Arts hosted 'Shrines for the Next Millennium', an extraordinary range of installations created by artists from Papua New Guinea, Niue, New Zealand, New Caledonia and Australia, and 'Hokianga', an exhibition of photographs taken by New Zealand artist Ross T. Smith.

The Powerhouse Museum offered three exhibitions. '1000 Years of the Olympic Games' displayed treasures that had never before travelled beyond the borders of Greece. 'Earth, Spirit, Fire – Korean Masterpieces of the Choson Dynasty (1392-1910)', was the first major exhibition of Korean art ever to be held in Australia and featured ceramics, furniture, painting and calligraphy. Leonardo da Vinci's most famous notebook, the *Codex Leicester*, was also exhibited.

The Australian Museum featured two exhibitions. For 'Landmarks for the 21st Century', a group of young people from different cultures photographed the landmarks that were important to them in their home cities – Sydney, Los Angeles, Mumbai, Paris, Mexico City and Cape Town. The second exhibition was 'Transitions – 17 years of the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award'.

The City Exhibition Space in Customs House hosted 'Sydney 2000: Olympic Design of the new Millennium' – a documentation of the extraordinary accomplishments of the architects, designers, landscape architects, artists and

21



MICHAEL RAYNER/SOCOG

20. 1000 Years of the Olympic Games, an exhibition held at the Powerhouse Museum, displayed priceless treasures never before seen outside of Greece

21. Djon Mundines poses with his installation Ngarka Shrine of the Unknown Koori, one of the installations of the Shrines for the Next Millennium at the Sydney College of the Arts

22



JAMIE PLAZA/ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS SYDNEY

engineers involved in the creation of the venues and precincts of Sydney's Olympic Games. Also at Customs House, Object Gallery, the Australian Centre for Craft and Design, held two shows. 'Circling the Square' was an exhibition of new jewellery and objects. Object's second show was 'Designing Minds', a survey of recent work by a selection of Australia's best designers and designer-makers.

Ivan Dougherty Gallery at the University of New South Wales College of Fine Arts presented 'Body Language – Art, Sport and Cyber Conversation'. The four artists featured in the exhibition used photography, performance and computer-based technology to create virtual cultures of physical and psychological intrigue.

Three exhibitions were featured at the State Library of New South Wales. 'Weird & Wonderful Sydney' chronicled the 20 years of extraordinary social and political change between 1953 and 1973. 'Australian Colonial Art' drew on the superlative holdings of colonial art in the Library. 'Shutter Speed' was a show of dynamic and breathtaking images from the collection of Allsport, the leading international sports photographic agency.

The Australian National Maritime Museum's contribution to the Festival was threefold. Most impressive in sheer scale was the *Batavia*, a replica of the 17th-century Dutch East India Company vessel that was shipwrecked on its maiden voyage off the coast of Western Australia in 1629. 'A Curious Coincidence' was an exhibition about

17th-century Dutch maritime explorers. The Museum also displayed a replica of the three-masted barque *Endeavour* in which Captain Cook first reached Australia, recently returned after completing a circumnavigation of the globe.

Two venues, the Royal Botanic Gardens and the National Trust's S. H. Ervin Gallery, were involved in the presentation of 'State of the Waratah' – a demonstration of how the state's floral emblem has featured in legend, art and industry.

At Sydney Olympic Park, the Olympic Co-ordination Authority generated the most significant program of large-scale public art in Australia, with both local and overseas artists commissioned to create works in, around and integrated with the Olympic venues.

Sculpture was showcased too in the City of Sydney's 'Sydney Sculpture Walk'. Each artwork was a response to something specific about Sydney, including the original geography of the site, its botanical history and its architecture.

David Jones, the Sydney landmark department store, played host to the 'IOC Art and Sport Exhibition', featuring the work of sixteen finalists in an international competition sponsored by 54 NOCs. Sydney's commercial galleries collaborated to present an impressive line-up of recent and contemporary Australian artworks in the galleries around the inner city.

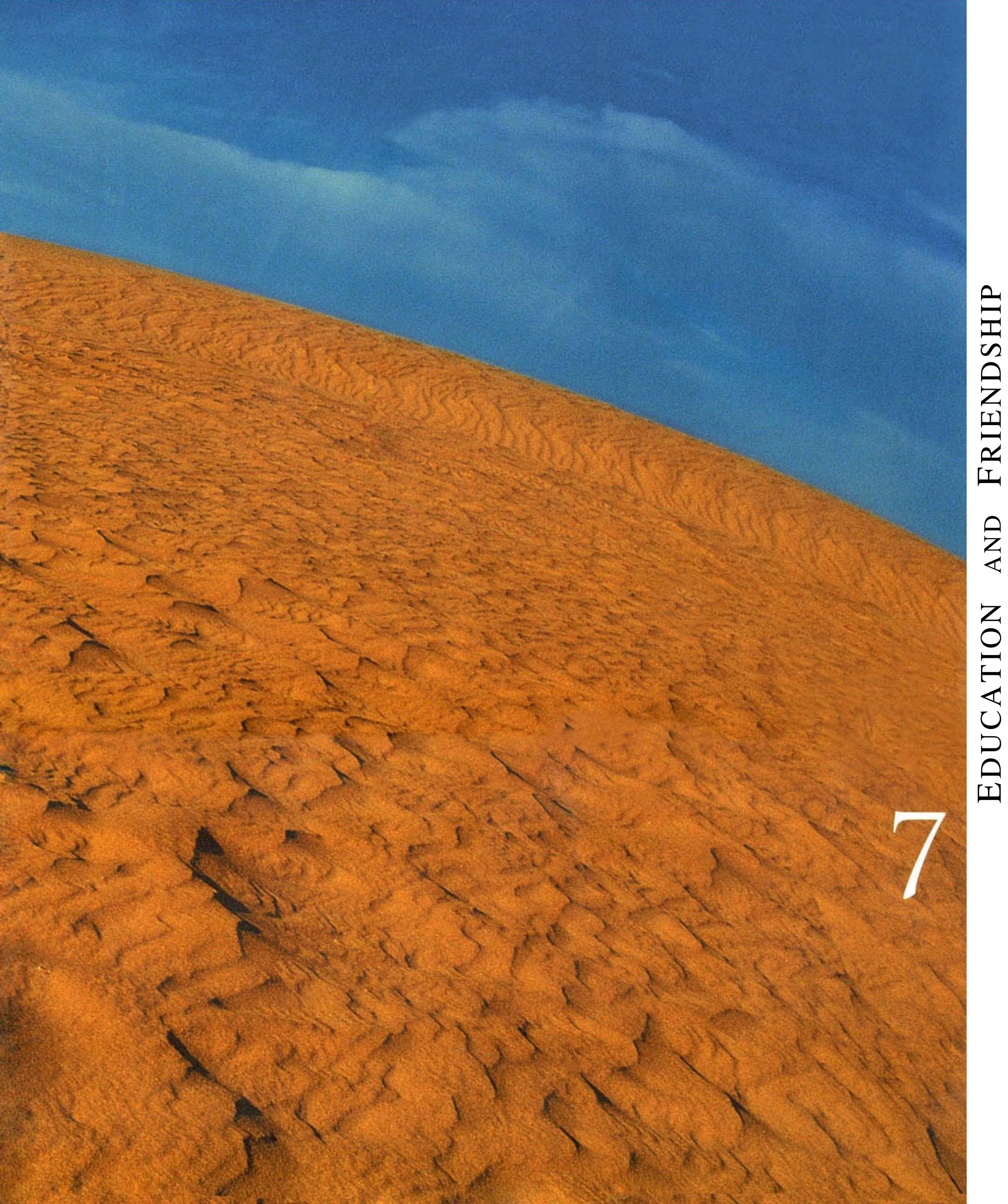


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SOGOG

22. Waratahs are in full bloom in the Royal Botanic Gardens for the State of the Waratah presentation
23. For the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival, internationally acclaimed artists gathered for the culmination of the four-year cultural celebration





7



The Olympic
Youth Camp





THE OLYMPIC YOUTH CAMP

St Josephs College

14 September - 1 October 2000

"In accordance with tradition, I call upon the youth of the world to assemble four years from now at Sydney."

In Atlanta 1996, IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch used these familiar words to remind aspiring athletes that Sydney's Olympiad began in just a few months. But for a happy few young men and women, the Games themselves were not the direct reason to assemble in Sydney in September 2000. They, on the strength of outstanding achievements in their individual fields and countries, had been selected to take part in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Youth Camp (OYC).

The OYC gave these 381 young people, aged 16 to 18 years, from 170 NOCs, speaking 70 different languages, a first-hand experience of the Olympic ideals of peace, enterprise, teamwork, sportsmanship, fair play and participation.

They had the chance to interact with their contemporaries and gain an awareness of the global community, develop an understanding of the role of the Olympic Games in modern society, establish an international circle of friends and achieve a sense of empowerment. For many, this was not only their first visit to Australia, but also the first time they had left their home country.

The OYC would be a life-changing experience for most campers. New ideas would be explored, new lessons learned. The organisers wanted participants to feel that they could change the world, and this was what most of them took home. The overall theme of the camp was 'The Environment and the Role of Youth in Its Protection'.

All in all, the OYC was an awesome opportunity for experience and leadership development, as well as for the formation of lifelong friendships. It was also an occasion for the participants to discover and enjoy the unexpectedly diverse island continent of Australia.

A camp was proposed by Sydney Olympics 2000 Bid Ltd as part of the bid to host the Olympic Games. Although there was not a contractual obligation for SOCOG to hold an OYC, Chapter 5, Section 58 of the Olympic Charter states: "... with the authorisation of the IOC Executive Board, the Organising Committee for the Olympic Games may, under its own responsibility, organise an international youth camp on the occasion of the Olympic Games."

The youth camp concept originated at the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm, when King Gustav V invited 1500 Boy Scouts to set up their tents near the Olympic Stadium. Although there were no further camps prior to the Second

World War, another Scandinavian host city, Helsinki, took up the idea in 1952. The experience proved so successful that an OYC has been held during each subsequent Olympic Games except those of Melbourne (1956) and Los Angeles (1984).

Planning

SOCOG began preparing for the OYC in November 1997. Close working relationships were established with most NOCs, and in March 1998 they were informed in more detail about dates, location and the plan of activities for the OYC. All were invited to send one male and one female participant. When some NOCs declined to nominate delegates, others were able to increase their representation; the USA sent ten delegates, Canada eight and New Zealand three. Australia would have 20 participants, four of them indigenous youth.

The Australian representative at the Atlanta OYC had happy memories and exhorted other young Australians to apply: "I would urge everyone between 16 and 18 years of age to enter. Mixing with young people from other countries is a fantastic experience, you can't beat it - and you get to go to the Games." Few would argue with his straightforward assessment.

It was the responsibility of each country's NOC to select their representatives; many invited applicants to explain in an essay why they should be chosen. While some criteria varied, all applicants had to identify their reasons for wanting to come, and indicate their sporting, academic and community involvement.

The Olympic Youth Camp

Volume Two
Chapter Seven

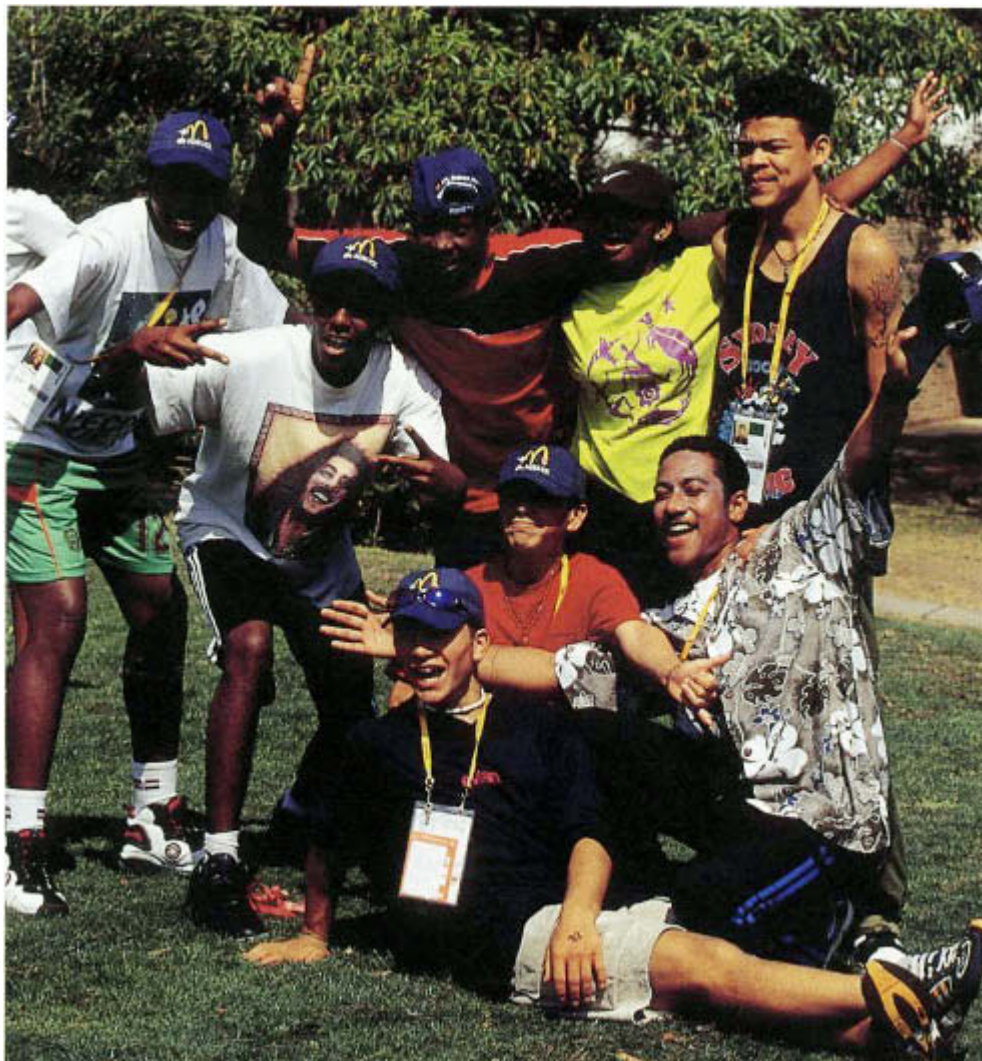


1. The Olympic Youth Camp was held at St. Joseph's College in Hunters Hill
2. Various electives were available for the youth campers. During an art workshop, participants created works on the topics of environment, culture and sport, which were later exhibited
3. Happy campers: participants pose during the official opening day at St. Joseph's



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MATTHEW STOCKMAN
ALLSPORT



3

TONY FEDERALLSPORT

The Olympic Youth Camp
Volume Two
Chapter Seven



UTE WEGMANN/SPORT

A total of 187 NOCs indicated their interest in the program. SOCOG and Olympic Solidarity – the IOC arm that provides financial aid to NOCs – would pay the airfares for participants. Team Millennium Olympic Partners sponsor McDonald's would pay the per diem for one camper from each participating NOC.

SOCOG attempted to finalise the number of participating NOCs at the Chefs de Mission Seminar in September 1999, but changes to arrangements, often unannounced, continued even after the camp had opened. The failure of many NOCs to respond to OYC requests, messages and deadlines made overall planning difficult.

Sydney



UTE WEGMANN/SOCOG

The base of the OYC was St Joseph's College, known locally as Joey's, a private boys' school in the suburb of Hunter's Hill on the lower reaches of the Parramatta River. Joey's is the largest boarding school in Sydney, with a rich sporting and Olympic tradition – it can count 15 Olympians as old boys. It is set in a magnificent 16-hectare park and has dining and residential facilities, a 50 m swimming pool, computer room, theatre, tennis courts, football pitches, volleyball and basketball courts, a cricket ground and a fully equipped gymnasium. Here the campers experienced the Olympic Games, and life in a cosmopolitan city. Their learning covered the specific objectives of Olympism; cultural diversity; environmentalism; and Australian history, geography and culture.



UTE WEGMANN/SOCOG

The participants began to arrive at the OYC on September 12, three days before the official opening of the Olympic Games. The Olympic torch relay, which passed Hunter's Hill on 13 September, was a cause for excitement for the campers, as two OYC delegates had been selected to carry the torch: Jessica McNeill of Australia and Magnus Sveinn Jonsson of Iceland. The entire camp went to watch the torchbearers, to cheer them on and then join with residents of Hunter's Hill for the community celebrations. On the next day, 14 September 2000, the OYC was officially opened by the Governor-General of Australia, Sir William Deane, and an Aboriginal elder from Sydney welcomed the campers to the Aboriginal ancestral lands on which the OYC was located.

During the Sydney phase the daily program included such electives as drama, dance, band, choir, website and newsletter. In addition there were Olympic Movement studies, environment projects, including the reforestation of 10 000 trees, the preparation of a paper titled *The Youth 2000 Paper on the Environment* which was presented to President Samaranch when he visited the OYC, and workshops on cultural diversity and stereotypes. All over St Joseph's there were groups of campers working together, creating dances and paintings, rehearsing songs and theatre pieces.



UTE WEGMANN/SOCOG

All OYC participants were given the chance to attend the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games, forming an audible and colourful cheering squad while the athletes marched into the arena. They also saw various sport competitions and visited the Olympic Village with their NOCs. The participants learned about Sydney through a 'Treasures of Sydney' treasure

4-7. Youth campers from around the world meet on the opening day of the Olympic Youth Camp, a day before the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games



8

SOCOCG

hunt and witnessed a surf-lifesaving carnival at Collaroy Beach. They hiked through the Blue Mountains and held cultural exchange evenings, during which they showcased examples of art and dance from their respective countries. This is how one of the campers described bushwalking in the Blue Mountains, "On the walks, campers were able to experience beautiful waterfalls, the soothing smell of the eucalyptus trees, and the uniquely Australian flora and fauna." The aroma of gum trees is the ubiquitous scent of the Australian bush.

In their natural habitat, the creatures of the Australian bush are shy and are often seen only fleetingly, or from a distance. There are, however, numerous wildlife reserves where the inhabitants are tamer, and visiting one of these the campers were able to hug agreeable koalas and consider other less cuddly locals, such as the saltwater crocodile, from a safe distance.

Some eminent Olympians gave the campers worthy encouragement and advice. Tapio Korjus, Finnish exponent of the javelin, talked to them about the experience of attending the OYC in Moscow in 1980, winning the gold medal in Seoul in 1988, and now, in Sydney, being a leader of the Finnish athletics team. His own OYC experience, he told the campers, contributed greatly to his continued involvement in sport and the Olympic Movement. Olympic legend Carl Lewis, winner of nine gold medals, who addressed the campers over breakfast one morning, asked them to take home with them what they had seen. "There are not many times when the entire world stops and joins hands. The Olympic Games is one of those times." He advised the participants to set goals, achieve them, then set more. "You obviously all made strong positive decisions in your lives or you wouldn't be here ... go back to your communities and inspire people."

The OYC had a flexible program with ample free time which participants used to catch up on sleep, letters, reading, journal writing and emailing, as email facilities were provided in the computer room. This free time was important as it also provided an opportunity for participants to get together and informally discuss issues that affected them.

For the organisers, running the OYC posed some challenges. The number of foreign languages that would be represented at



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TONY FEDERALSPORT



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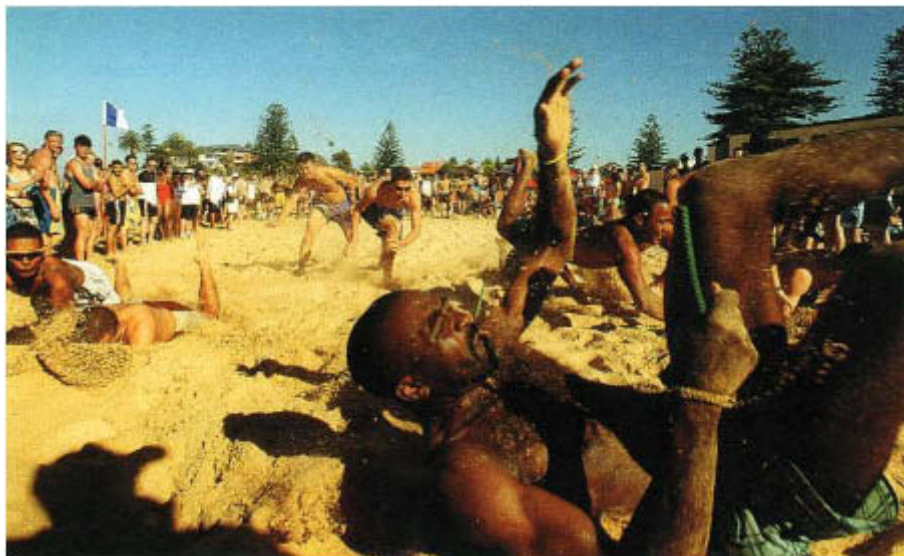
UTE WEGMANN/SOCOCG

8. St. Joseph's was conveniently located, close both to Sydney Olympic Park and the city

9. A participant performs a dance during the official opening of the camp. While at St. Joseph's, Cultural Exchange evenings gave participants a chance to demonstrate dances and songs to illustrate their country's traditions

10. During the days at St. Joseph's, there was a wide variety of sports on offer

11



SIMON DEAN/THE MAILY DAILY

dance and drama programs – presented works and demonstrated the success of the cultural exchange.

Aussie Adventure

On 27 September the campers split into groups of 40 for the first leg of their Aussie Adventure. This was a three-day homestay which provided a taste of small-town Australia for the campers, while they, like the torch relay, brought the Games to regional New South Wales. Ten towns a few hours out of Sydney, including Nowra, Moss Vale, Goulburn, Bathurst, Gosford and Port Stephens, were selected, and families with at least one youth the same age as the delegate billeted the campers. Each of the ten groups travelled to their towns by coach.

Four OYC staff deployed in each town to be called upon if needed, but in most case the delegates stayed with their host families throughout their visit. Families developed their own program of activities. The campers' stay was only three days duration but this was enough time, in many cases, for a strong bond to form and assurances of 'keeping in touch' were exchanged as the young delegates bade their hosts good-bye.

The campers were reunited on September 30 at Cairns, 2450 km north of Sydney in tropical North Queensland. This part of the camp offered more experiences with indigenous culture, as well as an introduction to the world heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef, two of Earth's most abundant and visually splendid ecosystems.

The OYC was split into males and females and housed at two resort hotels in Palm Cove, a small seaside village 30 km north of Cairns, far enough away to ensure that the bright lights of a major tourist city did not pose a distraction. Each day, buses gathered participants for their excursions: to Kuranda to see

12



LOUISE THROWE/THE GOULBURN POST

the camp and the varying standard of English amongst the participants had been identified as major issues during the planning phase. Despite SOCOG's request that all participants have at least enough understanding of English to comprehend basic directions and safety instructions, some NOCs sent young people who understood no English at all. A few spoke only a little-known language or dialect. While every effort was made to have interpreters present, there were instances when communication was difficult. Some NOCs seemed not to have spent much time agonising over their selection process and sent young athletes who thought they would be attending an intensive sports training academy, and had only the vaguest concept of the Olympic Games. Yet the energy, high spirits and happiness of the campers were contagious and not to be denied, and in the beautiful surroundings of St Joseph's College, all obstacles were overcome.

On their final evening at Joey's a celebration banquet was held. Groups from the cultural electives – the band, choir,

11. One of the highlights of the activities in Sydney was a Surf Lifesaving demonstration at Collaroy Beach, featuring a rescue, a motorboat relay, sand races, rowing and paddling. After a day of exhausting activities, the campers were treated to a beachside barbecue

12. A teamleader and campers from the Netherlands, Peru, Angola and Yemen gather for a group shot during their three-day family home stay in the Goulburn area

13. A special excursion during the Queensland stay took the youth camp participants to an indigenous community in Yarrabah, where they were, among other things, instructed in the art of boomerang throwing

13



BEN BLACKETT/THE CAIRNS POST

14



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the rainforest, the butterfly farm and Birdworld; to Yarrabah for a day of activities with the indigenous community of 3000 people from 28 different tribes; and finally, to the sapphire seas of the Great Barrier Reef – the only living thing on Earth visible from space – for snorkelling amidst the remarkable underwater life.

Representatives of the Cairns Youth Action Committee joined the campers for a banquet and Olympic Games Closing Ceremony party. Again, OYC delegates had the opportunity to meet with young people from Australia and share information and experiences. Watching the Closing Ceremony on television was an emotional occasion, a reminder that their time in Australia was drawing to an end. Delegates gathered for one final meal together on 4 October. Candles were distributed to all. The two torchbearers, Jessica McNeill and Magnus Sveinn Jonsson, had their candles lit by the Camp Director. They passed the flame on to the rest of the group. As the last candle was lit, the Sydney OYC ended – far too soon, in the opinion of most of the campers.

Ultimately the OYC was about new experiences. The campers had plenty of these, due to the number of different environments they encountered. Of course, a big place like Sydney was not entirely new to those from urban centres – although Sydney is more diverse than most cities – but diving in the translucent waters surrounding the coral cays of the Great Barrier Reef provided a thrill few could previously have experienced. Perhaps the young man from the Bahamas was one who had, but then, chewing on a straw and watching black and white cows ambling in to be milked on a Moss Vale, NSW, dairy farm, was certainly new to him.

The campers left their marks not only in the sands of tropical North Queensland. While in camp at Joey's the students created a web-page (www.oyc2000.com). They might have wished for more time to refine it but in it they have left a record of themselves and their time in Australia. They also created a chat room, which they continue to use to communicate with each other, with the easy informality that comes from having shared common experiences and adventures.

The novelty of the locations and the fact that there were no pre-existing social networks encouraged an 'all-for-one' spirit

of cooperation among the campers. "It wasn't hard because you had 381 youths from 170 different countries thrown together without anyone they knew, in the same place," one reflected. "We all had to depend on each other."

One young woman, on her return home overseas, reported that she was receiving up to 100 emails a day from her recent camp-mates. "I now have friends in every corner of the world," she told a reporter in her home-town. "That's great, except now the news [of crises] around the world, really hits home; I think: Yikes, I've got friends there!" Yet this new awareness that things happening far away also have consequences is not a bad thing. Olympism is after all an internationalist movement that encourages its adherents to consider issues with a vision that does not dissolve at the boundaries of their own nations.

Other participants agreed the camp had changed their outlooks on life. One said, "I want to travel around everywhere now, including Australia. I want to learn different languages ... I'd like to major in international studies or international relations. Now I think I'd like to do international law."

While over time the initial frenzy of communication will inevitably abate, it is equally certain that many of the friendships cultivated in the happy days of September 2000 will endure for many Olympiads to come.

The Olympic Youth Camp
Volume Two
Chapter Seven



15

UTE WEGMANN/SCOG

14. Youth campers were able to witness traditional aboriginal dances in Yarrabah

15. Friendships grew fast and proved to be one of the most precious memories for participants

16. Two Canadian participants pose with St. Joseph's College in the background. For many, their first trip to Sydney and Australia left a deep impression



16

UTE WEGMANN/SCOG

ACRONYMS

ACA	Australian Communications Authority	FIBA	International Basketball Federation; Fédération Internationale de Basketball
ACF	Australian Cycling Federation	FIC	"International Canoe Federation, Fédération Internationale de Canoë"
ACOG	Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games	FIE	International Fencing Federation; Fédération Internationale d'Esgrime
ADF	Australian Defense Force	FIFA	International Football Federation; Fédération Internationale de Football Association
AFC	Australian Flower Company	FIG	International Gymnastics Federation; Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique
AFH	Athletes Family Host	FILA	International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles; Fédération Internationale de Luttés Associées
AGAL	Australian Government Analytical Laboratories	FINA	International Swimming Federation; Fédération Internationale de Natation Amateur
AIBA	International Amateur Boxing Federation; Association Internationale de Boxe Amateur	FISA	International Rowing Federation; Fédération Internationale des Sociétés d'Aviron
AIS	Australian Institute of Sport	FITA	International Archery Federation; Fédération Internationale de Tir à L'Arc
ANOC	Association of National Olympic Committees	FIVB	International Volleyball Federation; Fédération Internationale de Volleyball
AOC	Australian Olympic Committee	FOP	Field of Play
AOP	Athlete Olympic Program	GAISF	General Association of International Sports Federations
APC	Australian Paralympic Committee	GCOG	Games Coordination Group
APCO	Association of Public Safety Communication Officials	GHQ	Games Headquarters
AQIS	Australian Quarantine Inspection Service	GIS	Games Information Service
ASDA	Australian Sports Drug Agency	GMP	Guaranteed Maximum Price
ASIO	Australian Security Intelligence Organisation	GMS	Games Management System
ASOIF	Association of Summer Olympic International Federations	GOP	General Organisation Plan
ATSIC	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission	GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation	GST	Goods and Services Tax
BCA	Bus and Coach Association of New South Wales	GTC	Games Time Commission
BCM	Business and Contract Management Sub-Program	HAAC	Homebush Arrivals and Accreditation Centre
C3	Command Control and Communications	HDPE	High Density Polyethylene
CAS	Court of Arbitration for Sport	IAAF	International Amateur Athletic Federation
CATV	Cable Antenna Television System	IBAF	International Baseball Federation
CCR	Commentary Control Room	IBC	International Broadcast Centre
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television	IBF	International Badminton Federation
CDOC	Common Domain Operations Centre	IBM	International Business Machines
CIS	Commentator Information System	IF	International Federation
CoS	City of Sydney	IHF	International Handball Federation
CSCC	Central Sydney Command Centre	IHF	International Hockey Federation
CSIRO	Commonwealth Science & Industry Research Organisation	IJF	International Judo Federation
DCAS	Detailed Competition Activity Schedule	INFO	Games Wide Results and Information Systems
DDS	Data Display System	IOA	International Olympic Academy
DH&S	Department of Occupational Health & Safety	IOC	International Olympic Committee
DIMA	Commonwealth Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs	IPC	International Paralympic Committee
DNC	Did Not Compete (Sailing)	IR	Industrial Relations
DNF	Did Not Finish (Sailing)	ISAF	International Sailing Federation;
DNQ	Did Not Qualify (Sailing)	ISF	International Softball Federation
DoT	Department of Transport	ISO	Industrial Supplies Office
DRM	Delegation Registration Meeting	ISSF	International Shooting Sports Federation
DSQ	Disqualified (Sailing)	ITF	International Tennis Federation
ECG	Executive Communication Group	ITTF	International Table Tennis Federation
EMS	Environmental Management System	ITU	International Triathlon Union
ENG	Electronic News Gathering	IVR	Interactive Voice Response Systems
EOI	Expressions of Interest	IWF	International Weightlifting Federation
EORG	Executive Operational and Readiness Group	IWMS	Integrated Waste Management Solution
EPA	Environment Protection Authority	LAN	Local Area Network
EPO	Erythropoietin	LOC	Licensing Operations Centre
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development	MAC	Multicultural Affairs Committee
FAC	Functional Area Command		
FAC	Federal Airports Corporation		
FACT	Functional Area Command Team		
FEI	International Equestrian Federation; Fédération Equestre Internationale		
FF&E	"Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment"		

MAC	Multicultural Advisory Committee	RALC	Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre
MCG	Melbourne Cricket Ground	RAS	Royal Agricultural Society
MDS	Master Delivery Schedule	ROC	Regional Organisation of Councils
MIK	Marketing-in-kind	RSM	Results Systems Managers
MLALC	Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council	RTA	Roads and Traffic Authority
MLLVC	Mirvac Lend Lease Village Consortium	SBS	Special Broadcast Services
MLSB	Multilingual Switchboard	SCC	Sport Command Centre
MOC	Main Operations Centre	SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
MOM	Management Operations Meeting	SFS	Sydney Football Stadium
MOST	Mobile Operations Support Team	SIAC	Social Impacts Advisory Committee
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	SIAC	Sydney International Aquatic Centre
MPC	Main Press Centre	SIC	Sport Information Centre
MRF	Materials Recovery Facility	SID	Sport Information Desk
NAOC	Nagano Organising Committee for the Winter Olympic Games	SIEC	Sydney International Equestrian Centre
NBC	National Broadcasting Company	SIRC	Sydney International Regatta Centre
NF	National Federation	SISC	Sydney International Shooting Centre
NIAC	National Indigenous Advisory Committee	SMAM	Sports Marketing and Management
NIMAA	National Indigenous Media Association Australia	SMC	Sydney Media Centre
NOC	National Olympic Committee	SOBL	Sydney Olympics 2000 Bid Ltd
NPC	National Paralympic Committee	SOBO	Sydney Olympic Broadcasting Organisation
NSW	New South Wales	SOC	Sponsor Operations Centre
NSWALC	NSW Aboriginal Land Council	SOCOG	Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games
NVP	Non-valid Pass	SOP	Sydney Olympic Park
OATH	Olympic Advocates Together Honourably	SPOC	Sydney Paralympic Organising Committee
OBIS	Olympic Business Information Service	SRA	State Rail Authority
OBRT	Olympic Business Roundtable	SRRB	Statement of Strategic Plan and Resource Requirements Budget
OCA	Olympic Co-ordination Authority	STA	State Transit Authority
OCA	Olympic Council of Asia	SVAC	Villages Advisory Committee
OCC	Olympic Commerce Centre	TCC	Technology Command Centre
OCC	Olympic Communications Centre	TDC	Transmission Distribution Centre
OCOG	Organising Committee for the Olympic Games	TETRA	Terrestrial Trunked Radio
OCS	On Course Side (Sailing)	TIS	Translating and Interpreting Service
OEQ	Olympic Entries and Qualifications System	TMC	Traffic Management Centre
OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety	TMC	Transport Management Centre
ONOC	Oceania National Olympic Committees	TMOP	Team Millennium Olympic Partner
ONS	Olympic News Service	TOC	Technical Operation Centre
OOC	Out of Competition Testing	TOC	Transport Operations Centre
OPRO	Olympic Precinct Regional and Operations Centre	TOP	The Olympic Partners
ORIS	Olympic Results Information Service	TOP	The Olympic Program
ORTA	Olympic Roads & Transport Authority	TPC	Technology Partner Council
OSCC	Olympic Security Command Centre	TTEPC	Technology Test Event Planning Cell
OSPG	Olympic Security Planning Group	UDAC	Uniform Distribution and Accreditation Centre
OSWC	Olympic Security Working Committee	UIPM	International Union of Modern Pentathlon; Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne
OTA	Olympic Travel Authority	UPS	United Parcel Service
OTWC	Olympic Transport Working Committee	USOC	United States Olympic Committee
OYC	Olympic Youth Camp	VIK	Value-in-kind
PAS	Public Address System	VOC	Village Operations Centre
PAQ	Post-arrival Quarantine	VPC	Venue Press Centre
PASO	Pan American Sports Organisation	VPM	Venue Press Manager
PCC	Protocol Coordination Centre	VSCC	Village Security Command Centre
PCG	Project Control Group	VTM	Venue Technology Managers
PEQ	Pre-export Quarantine	WADA	World Anti-doping Agency
PET	Polyethylene	WBA	World Boxing Association
PORG	Paralympic Operational Readiness Group	WOA	World Olympians Association
PSCC	Protective Security Coordination Centre	WRAMS	Water Reclamation and Management System
PTL	Planning Team Leader	WTF	World Taekwondo Federation
PVC	Polyvinylidene chloride		
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force		
RACC	Redfern Aboriginal Corporation Constructions		

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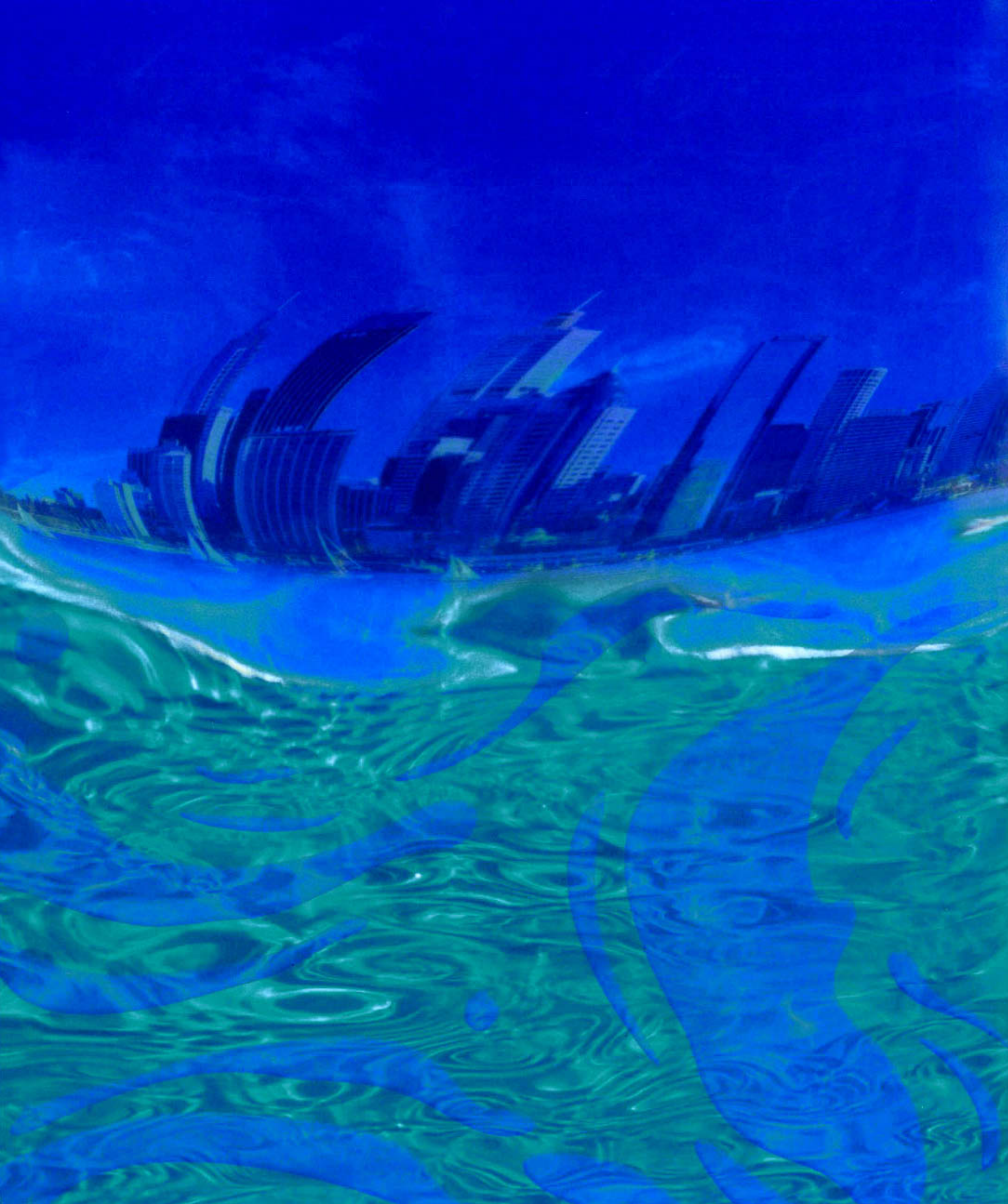
Chapter Seven:

The desert in Western Australia

Australian Tourist Commission

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