Resource Guide to the Olympic Games

Introduction

The Olympic Games are a central, staple topic within the study of sport. Together with the FIFA World Cup Finals, the Summer and (to a lesser extent) Winter Olympic Games (‘the Games of the Olympiad’) have become truly global events. The decision to award London the Summer Games in 2012 will increase interest, but before then, Beijing (China) is due to host in 2008, an Olympiad certain to raise a number of issues, not least the central relationship between sport and politics, the nature of Olympism and the modern Olympic Games.

Although clichéd, it is appropriate to state that within the Olympics can be found every sporting issue. As Tomlinson notes, ‘making sense of the Olympics is no straightforward task. Much depends on where you look.’ (2005: 62. ‘Olympic Survivals’ In L. Allison (Ed.) The Global Politics of Sport). The vast range of material available to those interested in studying the Olympics means that for the sake of usability, the focus of this guide is contained to broadly socio-historic-cultural aspects of the Games. Were a review to be made of all possible academic approaches to Olympism, the output would rapidly become too large to be of practical use. Overlap already exists with other HEA Resource Guides, most notably Event Management (Bowdin, 2003) and Volunteers (Warrior, 2005).

Therefore, those attempting to study the Olympics will need to remain focussed in their research, or face the prospect of becoming lost in an Olympic-sized forest of available material. That said, a useful A-Z, author-led guide with some 1600 reference (which begins to show the range of material on the Olympics) has been prepared by Veal and Toohey (2005). With so many issues and so much material, the use of headings in this guide is a somewhat artificial construct as few discrete areas exist in a study of the Olympics.

The Structure of this Guide

The vast majority of material identified here is either academic books or articles from peer reviewed, popular journals. Material which takes an uncritical position towards the Olympics, as well as that which is more questioning of the Games (and of the IOC in particular), is included. The guide begins with identification of 16 noteworthy multi-themed texts, each of which acts as a primary source and makes a useful contribution, although in some cases the text will principally act as a stepping-stone towards further (more focused) research. Where a book or journal article relates to a specific Olympiad it is shown under the specific Games (e.g. Sydney 2000). Where a
book or journal article focuses on a particular theme, it is shown under the appropriate themed heading. With a large number of journal articles being available, the more recent articles are included, with older articles only identified where they have not been superseded.

**Annotated Bibliography**

This is essential reading for those interested in Olympism. This book considers the future of the Olympic Games in terms of form and function. A multi-disciplinary collection of essays that cover a range of issues, it acts as a valuable single source. A serious collection with the depth of many papers suggesting it is not suitable for those seeking an introduction to Olympism. It includes the following chapters:

2. What’s the difference between propaganda for tourism or for a political regime? Was the 1936 Olympics the first post modern spectacle?
3. China and Olympism.
4. The global, the popular and the inter-popular: Olympic sport between market, state and civil society.
5. Cosmopolitan Olympism, Humanism and the spectacle of ‘race’.
7. The future if a multi-sport, mega-event: is there a place fir the Olympic Games in a ‘Post-Olympic world’?
9. The Disneyfication of the Olympics? Theme parks and freak-shows of the body.
11. Sportive Nationalism and globalisation.
13. Doping and the Olympic Games from an aesthetic perspective.
15. Laying Olympism to rest.

A polemic tract dismissed by many, it remains a refreshing and important critique of modern sport from an orthodox Marxist position. A number of chapters have relevance to the Olympic Games, including The Olympic Opiate; the Olympic Games and the Imperialist Accumulation of Capital; the Anti-Olympic Appeal of the Ecole Emanciptee.

This text is aimed very much at offering overview and introduction to the issues, which will require follow-up reading. The general level of discussion is at times quite basic with little depth or critical edge and it therefore best suited for entry level degree students. Contains a number of boxes with ‘in brief guides’ with study activities and review questions. Complemented by a CD Rom and website. Chapters: The idea of Olympism; The Ancient Olympics Games; Revival of the Modern Olympic Games; Britain in the Olympic movement; The Paralympics; the Olympics and the
mass media; Olympic Marketing; Economic and environmental impacts on the Olympic Games; Organising the Olympic Games; Olympic Politics; Ethics of sport and Olympism; Drugs and the Olympic Games; Sport, art and the Olympics; Olympic education – celebrating the Olympics; Case Studies (Olympic Games of 2000, 2002, 2012).


A trilogy of highly readable texts written by experienced investigative journalists. Highly critical of those they accuse of selling sport (and Olympism) to multi-national corporations, they suggest little remains of Corinthian idealism in sport. Focussing on the IOC members, its structure and Samaranch’s autocratic presidency a litany of examples is offered of corruption and greed. These are significant works which expose IOC corruption, and have in a small way, begun to move the IOC to become a more open and accountable organisation.


Highly recommended and complementing the journalistic style of Jennings and Simpson (see above), this is a highly accessible text with substantial evidence presented to suggest that the Olympics is no longer a movement but has become a multi-national industry. Focussing on the disjuncture between myth and reality, the author exposes the IOC’s Faustian relationship with the corporate world. Taking a grass-roots perspective, Lenskyj gives a voice to those who have been marginalised when the games comes to town – whether this be socially, economically, politically or environmentally. Two chapters are based on earlier journal articles, Ch. 4: Journal of Sport and Social Issues and Ch. 8: International Review for the Sociology of Sport. Powerful and essential reading. Contents:

1. Salt Lake City: The Beginning.
2. The Scandals Unfold: A Long History.
5. The Hidden Costs: Olympic Impacts and Urban Politics
6. Up Against the Olympic Industry: International Resistance.
7. Resistance in Atlanta and Sydney: Bread, Not Circuses.
9. The Mass Media and the Olympic Industry: Manufacturing Consent?


In contrast to Lenskyj text this is a revision of an earlier work (Economics of the Olympic Games 1972-2000), which seeks to highlight the beneficial impact of the Olympic Games, financially and socially. Adopting a broad interpretation, wider economic issues are considered, and whilst generally accessible there are some sections which require a grounding in economics. Overall, the tone is positive, and given the author’s thoroughness and expertise, the evidence presented needs serious consideration. Identification is given to the financial structure of the IOC, with hosting the Games seen as a catalyst for urban redevelopment. Contains an interesting discussion on how developing countries might be able to stage the Games, and a longer section on the various IOC committees. With a preface from
Rogge (IOC President), this is a far from critical account of the financial costs and consequences associated with hosting the Games. An edited section of this book appears in B. Houlihan (2003) (Ed.) Sport and Society: A Student Introduction (Chapter 14: The Economics of the Olympic Games: Winners and Losers. pp. 252-271)

Although it contains a wider focus than just the Olympics with consideration of other mega-events, this is a particularly useful text and therefore identified as 'essential reading'. Coverage of the social history and politics of the mega-events begins with the Crystal Palace Great Exhibition of 1851, with attention given to the 1936 and 1992 Games. It discusses whether Expos are expressions of capitalism, nationalism and imperialism, and explores the impact of mega-events on national identity, (global) citizenship public space and time, and on mass culture. It investigates the significant relationship between the media and mega-events. An important and valuable contribution which has extra weight (not that any were needed) given that CM Hall’s (1992) Hallmark Tourist Events text is no longer available.

Multiple essays which document the cultural politics of the Games. The overall quality of the essays is high and therefore highly recommended. Written in the run up to the Sydney Games, several of the essays address concerns which, though slightly different, will be faced by all host cities. The chapters are:

1. The Olympics in Retrospect: Winners, Losers, Racism and the Olympic Ideal.
4. Racing with Race at the Olympics: from Negro to Black to African American Athlete.
5. ‘We Showed the World the Nordic way’: Skiing, Norwegians and the Winter Olympic Games in the 1920s.
8. Women’s sports: Coming of Age in the Third Millennium.
9. One Chromosome Too Many?
14. The Olympics and the Everyday.
18. Sports for All? The Politics of Funding, Nationalism and the Quest for Gold.
Rich in detail, this was one of the first multi-themed, multi-authored publications, and remains a comprehensive and significant contribution to the study of the Olympics. Cross disciplinary, the various essays seek to critically examine the history of Olympism (in its widest sense). The book is split into themes: Genesis, Issues and Problems, Women, Politics and Nationalism, Reform, Philosophy (psychology, sociology). Suitable for under- and post-graduate study. Contents:

2. The Genesis of the Modern Olympic Games.
4. Restrictions against ‘Broken Time’ to Open Olympics.
6. Tryphosa, Melpomene and Nadir: The IOC and Women’s sport.
8. Political Problems in the Olympic Games.
9. Nationalism: Inevitable and Incurable?
10. Analysis of ABC-TV Coverage of the 21st Olympiad.
12. A Decalogue of Olympic Games Reform.
13. How Sport Psychology can help Olympism.
15. Reflections on Sport Psychology and the Olympic Athlete.
17. Crisis in the Modern Olympic Movement.
22. Athletes, Aesthetes, Intellectuals and the Olympic Games: Then and Now;
23. Sport Philosophy and Olympism; A Reaction and Elaboration.
25. Modern Olympism in the Conjunction of Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Civilisations: Olympism as the Transformative Concept of Purpose and the Human in Modern Sport.

In this follow-up to their previous collection, this book contains a number of revised chapters, as well as some new additions. As in any collection of work there are some less strong works, although the overall depth and level of engagement is good. Chapters

1. Olympia (Pindar).
2. The Ancient Olympics: Sport, Spectacle and Ritual.
3. Professionalism in Archaic and Classical Greek.
4. The Ecumenical Olympics: The Games in the Roman Era.
7. Why I Revived the Olympic Games (de Coubertin).
8. An Organisational Analysis of the IOC.
9. Toward a Definition of Olympism.
10. The Olympic Celebration of the Arts.
11. The Olympic Games if 1986.
12. The Games that Almost Weren’t.
13. The Nazi Olympics.
15. The Background, Nature and Implications of the Organisation of the ‘Capitalist Olympics’.
17. A Reminder of What We Can Be.
20. Politics and Nationalism in the Olympic Games.
22. Tryphosa, Melpomena, Nadia and Joan: the IOC and women’s sport.
23. Steroids.
24. Should the Olympic Games be Abolished?
25. The Olympic Games: Mirror of the World.
27. A Decalogue of Olympic Game Reform.

A serious piece of scholarship, examination is made of the ideological use of the Games by modern states and groups. Shows how the Games have acted as a site for the enactment of surrogate issues (unrelated to the sporting ideal). The book covers the emergence of the modern Games, beginning with Coubertin’s involvement, continues though the Brundage era, the 1980 and 1894 boycotts, and concludes with the Nagano Games (1998).

The book contains a clear structure, with a balanced, measured approach taken towards the Games. Clearly written it is accessible to undergraduates and makes a useful and welcome addition to Olympic literature. Contents:

1. Introduction.
2. The Ancient Olympics and the Relevance to the Modern Games.
3. The Revival of the Olympic Games.
4. The Modern Olympic Phenomenon.
5. Politics, Nationalism and the Olympic Movement.
7. The Olympics and the Mass Media.
8. Drugs in the Olympics: You Show Me Yours and I’ll Show You Mine.
10. Case Studies (Barcelona, Atlanta, Sydney).
11. The Future of the Olympic Games.
An authoritative academic who offers a concise and readable history of the Ancient and Modern Games. *Contents:* Introduction; Beginnings and evidence; Athletic events; Combat and equestrian events; Zeus country; Pindar and Immortality; Body, Mind and Greek athletics; Questions of profit and social class; The Athletes; Women and Greek athletics; Between the Greek and Roman worlds; The later centuries of Olympia; The Origin and Authenticity of the Modern Olympic Games.

A multi-themed, multi-authored collection of papers which address Olympic issues from sociological and historical perspectives. The individual chapters are written by some of the most active Olympic researchers, with the book acting as a useful single source. Appropriate for undergraduate level and a pointer for post-graduates. The book is split into 2 sections – the first covering the history and development of the Games, with the second part covering contemporary issues and controversies. *Contents:*

2. The History and Development of the Olympic Games.
4. The Olympic Games Experience: Origins and Early Challenges.
5. The Nazi Olympics of 1936.
6. The Cold War Games.
10. 'Another World is Possible': Recapturing Alternative Olympic Histories, Imagining Different Games.

The Ancient Games

Although not wholly focussed on the Olympics, this is a clearly written, useful introduction to athletics at the time of the Ancient Olympics.

A popular account of the ancient Greek sporting culture. Introductory level text offering a descriptive account of religious and social aspects of the Games. Written from the perspectives of those who attended and competed in the Games, this entertaining read is one of the few non-academic texts to be included in this guide.


Swaddling, J. (2004) *The Ancient Olympic Games* (London: British Museum Press) Revised and enlarged, the author discusses the origins of the Games. Focussing on mythology and religion, there is discussion of the ceremony and accompanying celebrations that were part of the wider Olympic festival. Subsequent chapters cover the athletes’ diet and medical treatment, sponsorship and patronage.


The Modern Games


A short and easy to read account of the Cotswold Games in 1612.

Concise overview focusing on the Games and those who have led the IOC – Coubertin, Baillet-Latour, Edstrom, Brundage, Killanin and Samaranch.


Part history / part biography this traces the life of who many see as being responsible for resurrecting the Ancient Games. Uses Coubertin’s own writings, autobiography, letters and private documents to explain his contribution in the re-establishment of the first modern Games.


Focussing on the first Modern Games in 1896, Smith offers a profile of Coubertin as well as exploring a number of issues prevalent at that time, including attitudes towards amateurism, the archaeological excavations of the Ancient Games site at Olympia, and rare discussion of the Greek Royal family’s attitude towards hosting the Modern Games.


Beginning with an account of Brookes and the Cotswold games, the ‘forgotten’ Olympics of 1866 and 1870, through to a questioning of whether Coubertin was the ‘founding father’ of the modern games. This is a carefully documented and serious historical study of the ‘revival’ of the Games. Contents:

1. The Birth of the Olympic Idea 1833-1858.
2. The First Zappas Olympiad, 1856-1859.
4. The Olympic Movement in Greece, 1869-1875.
6. Enter Pierre de Coubertin, 1883-1890.
7. The Baron at Work, 1890-1894.
8. The 1894 Paris Congress and D. Vikelas.
14. The Olympic Games Finally Revived.

Paralympics

Originating in the Stoke Mandeville Games of 1948, the first officially recognised Paralympic Games took place in Rome (1960). The 1988 Games in Seoul was the first where the host city for the Olympics also staged the Paralympics. The Paralympics Games involves athletes with a disability and is divided into distinct categories (amputees, wheelchair, vision impaired, ‘Other’ - such as thalidomide and multiple sclerosis). The category ‘Intellectual Disability’ is currently under review given the events surrounding the Spanish basketball team in Sydney 2000.

http://www.paralympic.org
The official website of the International Paralympics Committee.

http://www.paralympics.org.uk/
British site for The British Paralympic Association (BPA).


A collection of 28 papers, divided into 6 sections, which whilst not entirely focussing on the Paralympics, does contain a number of relevant contributions using socio-cultural perspectives (see Chapters 1 to 8 and 18 to 20).

Staging the Games – The Host Cities

Some Olympiads have received greater academic attention than others, with the Winter Games very poorly represented. Some of the more recent Games are noticeable by their absence, i.e. Seoul (1988), and Athens (2004), but one can be more confident that there will be a deluge of publications on the Beijing (2008) and London (2012) Games.

1904 – ST LOUIS
Account of Coubertin’s disappointment at Chicago not getting the Games. Researched evidence offers an overdue account of the Games (from a non-IOC position). Discusses Coubertin’s feeling towards the Games, which went from a ‘forgotten Olympics to a failed Olympics’.

1912 – STOCKHOLM

1932 – LOS ANGELES
One of the few texts that focuses on women’s early involvement in the Games. Based on interviews with women athletes who competed in 1932, the discussion is supplemented with analysis of newspaper reporting of the Games.


1936 – BERLIN


One of the many texts available on the 1936 Games, this contribution from a former journalist offers a primarily descriptive (and readable) account of the events leading
up to the Games as well as the Games themselves. One chapter focuses on Jesse Owens, with a fuller account of his life to be found in Donald McRae's (2002) *In Black and White. The untold story of Joe Louis and Jesse Owens*


A collection of essays that focus on six nations (Germany, USA, GB, France, Italy, Japan) and their attitudes and experience of the 1936 Games.


Although over 30 years since first published, this remains a staple and insightful account of the 1936 Games.


*Olympia* (Film)


A short but useful review uses the textual surface presented in the film to analyse three perspectives to explore the textuality and narrative from a German perspective, a conceptual perspective and a feminine perspective.

1968 – MEXICO CITY


1972 - MUNICH


One Day in September (Film)

1976 – MONTRÉAL


1980 – MOSCOW
A number of texts that were published on the 1980 Games are no longer available and difficult to source second-hand, and have therefore been excluded.

Difficult to find (libraries are the best source). A descriptive and analytical account of the events surrounding the decision to boycott the 1980 Games. Assessment on the use of sport for political purposes, the author considers whether this was a success (and for whom).


1984 – LOS ANGELES

A useful contribution in four chapters: Primer in Sport and Politics; Politics and the Olympics; Case study of Los Angeles; Wither the Olympics.

1992 – BARCELONA

Explores how the 1992 Games brought together issues of (Catalan) identity, the state and the IOC (inc. Samaranch). A considered and thorough assessment of nationalism and sport.


1994 – LILLEHAMMER
The first edited collection of articles which examine highly successful (in media terms) of the Winter Games.

Sociological assessment of the role and use of the broadcast media at the Games.


1996 – ATLANTA


2000 – SYDNEY
Collection of essays which cover all stages in the development of buildings for the Sydney Games


Although now out of print it is worth trying to source second-hand or in libraries. A multi-authored text split into five sections (The Event; Wining and Designing the Games; Staging the Games; The Other Games; Beyond the Games) which address a range of Olympic issues experienced before, during and after the 2000 Games. Contents:

1. The Greatest Peacetime Event.
2. Hallmark Events.
3. Winning and Designing the Games.
4. Winning the Bid.
5. Design.
6. Australian Identity.
7. Urban Design.
11. The Media.
12. Marketing and Sponsorship.
13. Drugs.
14. Tourism.
15. The Cultural Olympiad.
16. The Paralympics.
17. Legacy.
18. Costs and Benefits


Focussing on the 2000 Games, this is a significant contribution to the (often hidden) costs and impacts of the Olympic Games. Focussing on the economic and social realities of hosting the Games, this is a welcome addition to her previous book on the ‘Olympic Industry’


2002 – SALT LAKE CITY


2004 - ATHENS
Significant by an absence of socio-historic academic work.

2008 – CHINA


Given the lack of material currently available on the Beijing Games, in the meantime it might be useful to read up on Chinese sport, with the following texts being helpful.


Riordan, J. and Jones, R. (1999) (Eds.) *Sport and Physical Education in China* (London: Spon)

**2012 - LONDON**

As the decision to award the Games to London was made relatively recently, there is little currently available. This is certain to change. In the meantime, substantial critical commentary can be found in the popular press (relevant websites are shown later in this guide).


Official site for the London 2012 Games.


Available at: [http://www.demos.co.uk/catalogue/goldrush/](http://www.demos.co.uk/catalogue/goldrush/)


Available at: [http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ttri/pdf/2005_5.pdf](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ttri/pdf/2005_5.pdf)

**Bidding to Host**


**Politics**


This is a political study which examines the history of the Games from their ‘revival’ in 1896. It discusses apartheid in South Africa, the division of the Korean peninsula and the two Germany’s. It questions the motives of those cities bidding to host the Games. The second part covers the boycotts of 1980 and 1984, and the Seoul (1988) and Barcelona (1992) Games. It concludes by looking at the third millennium with a very brief reflection on issues facing the IOC and Olympic movement (e.g. doping, terrorism, ‘gigantism’). Concludes with a discussion on whether the Games have outgrown their ‘usefulness’.


One of the first texts to consider the relationship between sport and politics, this is now somewhat dated. It includes historical reporting and assessment of the role of politics in the Games and traces the centrality of politics in the Olympics from its origins, focussing on the 1980s boycott and anticipates the boycott of the 1984 Games.


GENDER


This is a collection of papers presented at a pre-Olympic congress in Brisbane (2000). This selection covers the experience of women within the Olympic movement. Contents:

- Gender, Science, Culture and Politics: 100 Years of Women in the Olympics; Science, Myths and Prejudice: Denial of Women as Athletes
- Femocrats, Technocrats and Bureaucrats: Women's Contested Place in the Olympic Movement
- Female Athletes with a Disability: Perspectives and Opportunities
- The Movement for the Promotion of Women's Sport in Japan.
- Body and Power: From Cripples to Olympic Champions - Chinese Women's Long Struggle for Full Equality
- Indigenous Women in the Olympics; Where Were They?
- Female Involvement in the Organization and Administration of the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games
- Women Olympic Competitors 1900-1936: New Light on Old Controversies
- The 1928 Olympic 800 Metres: Did Women Competitors Really Collapse?


**RACE AND ETHNICITY**


**The International Olympic Committee (IOC)**

Created in 1894 by Coubertin and Vikelas, in recent years the IOC has come under increasing scrutiny and has been found wanting in terms of extensive corruption, not least under Samaranch’s leadership. Whilst some efforts were made to reform some of the more blatant examples of corruption by IOC members, more fundamental change is needed if the IOC is to live up to the ideals it espouses.


Uses IOC internal documents to detail the commercial aspects of the games (focussing on sale of TV rights, Olympic symbols) to show the sheer commercialisation of the Games.


This traces the life of Avery Brundage, his sixty-year association with the Olympics, and indicates his contributions to the modern Olympic movement.


Pound, D. (2004) *Inside the Olympics. A Behind the Scenes Look at the Politics, Scandals and the Story of the Games* (Canada: John Wiley and Sons) Purporting to be an insider’s account of the IOC, Pound is a former IOC vice-president and has become an outspoken critic of IOC corruption under Samaranch’s presidency; he is currently the chairman of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). Contents:

**Going Home**
Who Guards the Guards: Judging
Performance Cheats: Doping
The Flame Flickers: Politics and Terror
Playing Fair: Human Rights
Keeping Corporate Company: Sponsorship
Broadcast Bonanza: TV Rights
Selecting Olympic Hosts (Zeus Help Us)
Passing the Torch: Samaranch


**Olympism**

**OLYMPISM AND PHILOSOPHY**


*Fair Play at the Olympics:* [www.fairolympics.org](http://www.fairolympics.org)

[www.nosweat.org.uk](http://www.nosweat.org.uk): Grass-roots, activist site focussing on clothing, sweatshops and multi-nationals. Consequently, it often contains discussions and campaigns against the backdrop of mega-events such as the Olympics.

**DRUGS**


Not specific to the Olympic Games, this is a clear account of the issues facing the Olympic movement.


Chapters by Verroken (Ch.2) – Drug Use and Abuse in Sport; Armstrong and Chester (Ch. 4) - IOC Regulations in Relation to Drugs Used in the Treatment of Respiratory Tract Disorders; Verroken and Mottram (Ch. 11) – Doping Control in Sport.


Multi-authored accounts of drug use in the Games using an historical and political framework. Details the ethical aspects, protocols and procedures associated with drug taking and testing.

**OLYMPISM, INDIVIDUALISM, TEAM SPORTS AND ELITISM**


**THE CULTURAL OLYMPIAD**


**GREEN / ENVIRONMENT ISSUES**

The Greenpeace Olympic Environmental Guidelines
A Guide to Sustainable Events outlines the criteria by which countries who bid to host the 2008 Games were assessed in terms of their ‘green-ness’. On-line access is available at: http://greenpeace.org.au/archives/olympics/newguide.html


**THE FUTURE**


This includes a Forward by Samaranch, which suggests that this book was always unlikely to offer a critical edge. What is offered is a pedestrian stroll through the basic issues. Starting with Coubertin, it covers issues such as nationalism, the increasing size of the Games, drugs. There is an interesting (if somewhat short) chapter on criticism made of the Olympics Games. Concludes with 21 observations for the 21st century.
This focuses on the corporate sponsorship and commercial partners that now are integral to the Modern Games. Tracing the commercial development of the Games the authors describe the Games as now ‘commercially saturated’ – and highlights how ‘the Olympic partners’ (corporate sponsors), and the Olympic movement, work together to maximise (exploit?) Olympic ideals through children’s educational material.


Ten chapters which consider the globalisation of sport, in particular the role of international NGOs and their relationships with the state and trans-national corporations. The chapter by Tomlinson (Ch. 4: ‘Olympic survivals’) contains a reflection on the relationship between globalisation and sport, the Modern Olympic Games and Sydney 2000


The Media

A collection of papers which cover the role and function of television and its relationship with the Olympics. Focuses on three themes: economics, organisation & technological infrastructures, and the culture of communication.


Miscellaneous

An almost endless amount of year books, photo books, medical related guides, encyclopaedias, reference guides and biographies are available – select as appropriate! Those identified below are amongst the better guides.


This reference text contains information on the athletes, competitions and IOC. An eclectic range of lists that including positive drug tests and final Olympic torch bearers – as well as more ‘mundane’ listings of medal winners.

Statistical records abound from the various Olympiads and their events, supplemented by descriptions, anecdotes and observations on the history of the Modern Games.

JOURNALS

- Journal of Olympic History
- Journal of Sports Management
- Journal of Sports Economics
- Journal of Sports Tourism
- International Review for the Sociology of Sport
- Journal of Sport and Social Issues
- Quest
- Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport
- Journal of Olympic History
- Olympika
WEB SITES

BBC: http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/other_sports/olympics_2012/default.stm
The Guardian: http://www.guardian.co.uk/olympics2012/
The Times: http://www.timesonline.co.uk/
The Independent: http://sport.independent.co.uk/olympics/

Official website of the Olympic Movement: http://www.olympic.org/
The official guide to all aspects of the Olympic Movement contains factual information on IOC spending, dates and structures. Comprehensive and easy to use, the site has links to all areas of the IOC and National Olympic Committees, International Sports Federations and Olympic Movement Organisations (Court of Arbitration, Fair Play, International Paralympics, WADA). Each Olympic sport represented at the Games has its own dedicated website.

HOST CITIES
Each host city has a dedicated website


This is an on-line bibliography on the Olympic Games which lists approximately 1800 items.

ON-LINE / CD ROM DATABASES

Usually available though the library network (with subscription needed), the following databases are particularly useful:

- **SportDiscus:** http://www.ovid.com/site/catalog/DataBase/153.jsp?top=2&mid=3&bottom=7&subsection=10
  Comprehensive, bibliographic coverage of sport, fitness and related disciplines. Has access to the Olympic Museum Library database.

- **Newsbank:** http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/newsbank.html
  A full-text database covering a range of broadsheet and tabloid newspapers, including the Sunday issues. The archive goes back to 1998. The papers may be searched individually or as user-determined groups.

- **Lexis Nexis:** http://www.lexisnexis.com/academic/
  Offers financial, company and sector information.

OPEN ACCESS DATABASES

- http://www.altis.ac.uk/
  A very good, searchable guide to access a range of relevant sites.

- http://www.aafila.org/
  The Amateur Athletic Foundation site has access to more than 40,000 documents.
Delivery and Assessment

With such a large range of possibility in terms of content, the starting point has to be the identification of which period/which theme(s) are to be selected. For a one semester (10 week teaching block) a basic introduction could be offered within three week blocks covering, a) the Ancient Games, b) the Modern Games and c) key contemporary issues. One will need to consider whether to offer an overview or to seek to develop a depth of understanding on a particular Games / issue.

- Ancient Games
  - The Epic Tradition
  - (Phaecian Games, Funeral Games; Olympia; Rome)
  - Organised Games, Sporting Events and Decline.

- The ‘Revival’ of the Modern Games
  - Founder; Principles; Early Games; Growth.

- Contemporary Issues
  - Focus on experiences of a host city or specific issue,
    - Politics, Boycotts & Crisis.
    - Gender; Race; Elitism.
    - Myths and Reality.
    - Drugs Use.
    - The Role of the IOC.
    - Commercialism
    - The Future of the Games
      - e.g. Reform, Gigantism

ASSESSMENT

Whilst exam questions can avoid instances of plagiarism, essay-based questions allow for research and depth of understanding to be developed. The wealth of material makes plagiarism sometimes difficult to identify, therefore 'straightforward' questions should be avoided, and need careful contextualisation and could involve comparative or future-based (e.g. London 2012) scenarios.

Celebration of elitism over ‘sport for all.’ Hero worship rather than participation.
Issues of nationalism / excessive commercialisation and compatibility with Olympic ideals.
Who ‘owns’ the Games? Who are the Games for?
Compare and contrast the Ancient Games with the Modern Games.
The role of the IOC (past, present and future)
Future of the Games (e.g. gigantism, cheating, commercialisation)

About the Author

Jonathan Dart is formerly a Research Officer at Leeds Metropolitan University, where he worked on various sport and leisure projects including racism in grass-roots football. He completed his PhD in 2000 at Leeds, which looked at the relationship between work and non-work time, space and activity, before going to work at McMaster University in Canada. He is currently a Senior Lecturer at Leeds Trinity and All Saints College teaching social, historic and political aspects of sport and leisure.