

Track and Field



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Some Important Dates in a Very Long History

It would need an extremely bulky encyclopaedia to cover the very long history of athletics. This very condensed précis is obviously not comprehensive.

12th century: the first public games organized in England.

1855: the first book dealing solely with athletics published in London.

1860: creation of the first U.S. club: the San Francisco Olympic Club.

1866: inauguration of the English Championships.

1867: first meeting in France, at Boulogne-sur-Mer.

1968: first indoor meeting, in New York.

1880: founding of the English Amateur Athletic Association.

1887: the Union of French Societies of Athletic Sports is created.

1896: first modern Olympic Games in Athens.

1912: first man over 2 m in the high jump: the American George Horine (2.03 m).

1912: creation of the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF).

1924: the Finn Paavo Nurmi triumphs at the Paris OG and breaks two world

records in one day: 1,500 m (3:52.6) and 5,000 m (14:28.2).

1928: women compete in the Amsterdam OG.

1934: first European Championships in Turin.

1935 (May 25): the American Jesse Owens, in 76 minutes, beats five world records: long jump: 8.13 m; 220 yards: 20.3 sec; 200 m: 20.3 sec; 220 yards hurdles: 22.6 sec; 200 m hurdles: 22.6 sec; and equals one: 100 yards: 9.4 sec.

1951: the Czech Emil Zatopek runs more than 20 km in one hour (20.052 km).

1952: Emil Zapotek triple olympic champion in Helsinki (5,000, 10,000 m, marathon).

1954: the Englishman Roger Bannister runs the mile in less than 4 minutes (3:59.4).

1960: the German Armin Hary clocks 10 sec for the 100 m.

1968: the American Bob Beamon wins the Mexico OG long jump with 8.90 m.

1972: official electric timing at the Munich OG.

1977: records by electric timing only are taken in consideration in sprint.