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**THE GREEK GIRL GUIDES ASSOCIATION**



## **Olympia Badge**

### **Message to all Leaders and Trainers of WAGGGS Member Organizations**

Dear Leaders and Trainers,

The **WAGGGS Olympia Badge** is a sport-oriented activity pack created by Soma Hellinidon Odigon (The Greek Girl Guides Association) for all Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the world.

This pack was initially inspired by the fact that Athens is hosting the 2004 Olympic Games, but eventually grew as a unique idea: through Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting every Olympic Games event in the future could be an opportunity for international celebration, for participation in sport and for the promotion of the ideals of the Olympic Spirit in combination with the Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting spirit.

Above all, this badge aims to trigger enthusiasm among all members of our World Association for sporting activities and to enhance awareness of the Olympic Games, particularly beyond the territorial limits of countries hosting the event.

The series of activities included in this pack have been designed in a way that can be carried out by your teams through Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting programmes any time and regardless of when/where the Olympic Games take place. The activities are relevant both to the Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting law and our ways of working. They are also relevant to WAGGGS' new triennial theme, "Our Rights Our Responsibilities".

We suggest you:

- 1 Study the pack and the resource material;
- 2 Adjust the activities to meet the needs of your group (age, interests etc);
- 3 Enjoy the activities, have fun and give your members the opportunity to be awarded the WAGGGS Olympia Badge.

We welcome any questions or comments about the **WAGGGS Olympia Badge** at:

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Finally we would like to share with you all the celebration of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games – the celebration of the return of the Games to their place of birth!

Good luck in your activities!  
Play well, play fair!

Yours in Guiding

**THE GREEK GIRL GUIDES ASSOCIATION**



# Our Rights, Our Responsibilities 2002 - 2005

## Olympia Badge



### Introduction

The **WAGGGS Olympia Badge** is a sport-oriented activity pack created by Soma Hellinidon Odigon (The Greek Girl Guides Association) for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the world. The idea for the badge came as a response to two significant events – the launch of the new WAGGGS Triennial Theme “Our Rights, Our Responsibilities” and the decision that the Olympic Games 2004 were to be held in Greece. The badge aims to trigger enthusiasm for sporting activities among all members of the World Association and to enhance awareness of the Olympic Games, particularly beyond the territorial limits of countries hosting the event.

In describing the badge, the Greek Girl Guides Association has said the following:

- *“The Olympic Badge is an activity promoting peace.”*
- *“It supports the development of women in sport and women as peace-makers within sport.”*
- *“It promotes WAGGGS’ public image as a leading World Youth Organization for girls and young women involving large numbers of motivated volunteers.”*
- *“It is strongly connected with the new Triennial Theme, ‘Our Rights Our Responsibilities’.”*
- *“It fulfils WAGGGS’ mission for the development of girls and young women in sport.”*

Since the badge honours the Olympic spirit, its true origins are ancient – for the Olympic Games began more than 2,700 years ago! Records show that the earliest ancient Olympic Games were held in Greece around 776 BC. From this date, the Olympic Movement began its evolution into a philosophy of life, exalting the qualities of body, will and mind as a balanced whole. From this Olympic philosophy were born Olympic ideals, placing noble competition, sport, peace, culture and education at the very core of Greek civilisation.

There is a great deal you can learn about the Olympic Games. If you have access to the Internet, you can look on the following web pages:

[www.ioc.org](http://www.ioc.org)

[www.athens2004.com](http://www.athens2004.com)

[www.olympictruce.org](http://www.olympictruce.org)

[www.olympiceducation.gr](http://www.olympiceducation.gr)

[www.paralympic.org](http://www.paralympic.org)

[www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org)

[www.blues.uab.es/olympic.studies/](http://www.blues.uab.es/olympic.studies/)

Or you can look at the resource pages attached to this pack and learn more about: *The Olympic Spirit; The Olympic Games; Ancient Olympia; Sporting Events; Olympic Myths; Olympic Prizes; The Award Ceremony; Olympic Traditions; The Olympic Oath and The Olympic Flame.*

## The Olympia Badge “Medals”

The Olympia Badge has been developed under three headings: *Stadion*, *Naos* and *Theatron*. These translate as *Stadium*, *Temple* and *Theatre* and each represents an aspect of personal development considered to be Olympic ideals:

- **Stadium** represents the harmonic development of body and the effort to acquire skills and fitness and appreciation of both environment and ourselves. The *stadion* activities relate to practicing sports and developing the body.
- **Temple** represents the spiritual dimension of our existence, the development of the mind and the acceptance of other people’s minds and ideas. The *Naos* activities relate to the spirit of the Games and their history, values, symbols etc.
- **Theatre** represents the balanced development of our soul, our cultural and emotional self-respect and tolerance, and our inner peace that is the prerequisite for the peace around us. The *Theatron* activities relate to intercultural character of the Games, the special culture of the Games and the artists that have been inspired by the Olympic Spirit in their work.

Just like Olympic medallists in ancient Greece, Girl Guides and Girl Scouts must make progress in all three categories to earn the Badge and, just as in the Olympic Games, there are three levels to reach:

- In order to obtain the “**bronze medal**”, Girl Guides/Girl Scouts must complete one activity from each of three categories (three activities in total).
- In order to obtain a “**silver medal**” two activities from each category are required (six activities in total).
- In order to obtain a “**gold medal**” three activities from each of the three categories are required (nine activities in total).

All activities can be easily adapted to all age groups and provide the opportunity for children, adolescents and adults to obtain all medals (badges). The activities are described in the next section of this pack.

## The Olympia Badge and the Triennial Theme

The Olympia Badge relates well to the Triennial Theme “Our Rights, Our Responsibilities”, since both support the right to personal development and security and both promote our responsibility as citizens, participants and members of society. Think about the issues examined within the Triennial Theme packs as they relate to the Olympia Badge:

- **The Right to Learn** can include the right to physical education and to the cultivation of sports for young people. It can also remind us of our responsibilities to understand, care for and respect the human body.
- **The Right to Be Happy** can be related to our sense of physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing – the result of a healthy mind and body achieving its potential. The human race is sociable and the right to be happy can also relate to being part of society and to taking part.
- **The Right to Be Me** can be interpreted as recognising and valuing our own potential and the potential of those around us in sport. It is about respecting our differences as well as sharing those things which make us similar. It is about honouring personal characteristics and achievements and expressing our own unique skills.
- **The Right to Live in Peace** includes our inner peace. Peace is also elaborated through the idea of World Truce during every event of the Olympic Games. Nations can only compete at the Olympic Games if they cease to be in conflict with each other at least for the duration of the Games.
- **The Right to Work Together** reminds us of the personal development achieved through being part of a group or team. Groups and teams that work well are built on trust, respect and a sense of belonging. The Olympic Games provide an opportunity for people of all nations and backgrounds to create teams and compete alongside each other in a spirit of fair play and mutual respect.
- The Olympic Games and the Olympia Badge also honour **The Right to Be Heard** because they promote democracy by encouraging peace, harmony and human respect and understanding.

Olympia Badge



The Olympia Badge activities included in this pack have been designed in a way that can be carried out by your teams through Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting programmes at any time and regardless of when/where the Olympic Games take place. The activities are relevant both to the Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting law and to our ways of work.

We hope that the information above and the activities that follow stimulate your interest in the Olympic Games and its spirit and deepen your commitment to the Triennial Theme issues. Activities have been devised not only to increase knowledge but also to facilitate “learning by doing” and working with others. Overall, we hope that they will help those who take part to develop inner qualities which will enable them to live their lives in a way which they believe to be true and right.

**Good Luck!**



# ACTIVITY PACK

## A GUIDE TO THE ACTIVITIES

All activities can be used for self-help or to help others. Some activities are best carried out by an individual, others by groups.

As each activity is planned and carried out, remember **PPR**:

- **Partnership**: can we involve another organization in this activity?
- **Publicity**: can we help raise the profile of our work through the media or by sharing information?
- **Recording**: how will we record the work we are doing so that we retain a personal record of our achievements?

The activity pack has been written for leaders to use directly with WAGGGS members or for Girl Guides/ Girl Scouts working alone.

**It is expected that you will adapt the activities, including the language, to suit your local needs.**



### STADIUM (Body)

1. Name the Olympic sports and the criteria for these sports to be part of the Olympic Games.
2. Choose an Olympic sport that you like and learn about its history, best athletes and records. Get in touch with people who practice this sport in your country or who might have attended the Olympic Games. Try to practice this sport yourself.
3. What are the Paralympics and the Special Olympics? Get in touch with athletes who have participated in these events.
4. Try to practice a specific sport from the Paralympics yourself or with your group, simulating the special needs of athletes (e.g. running 60m blindfolded following a rope etc).
5. Choose at least three Olympic sports which relate to air, water, or earth and learn as much as you can about them. Organize and play these sports with your group.
6. In which sports are animals used? In which sports is other equipment required such as bicycles, skis, boats, balls etc. Choose a sport and learn more about the kind of care and training the animals need or what kind of maintenance is required. Volunteer for two months to work in places where they keep animals for these sports or where the technical equipment is being maintained.
7. Learn as much as you can about an Olympic sport which you have never heard of and research its history and origins. Play it with your patrol, or present what you have learned to your group.
8. Learn more about the Olympic Committee and other sporting organizations that exist in your country. What is their connection with the International Olympic Committee or the respective International Sport Federation? Present your findings at a group in your community to communicate your findings with others.
9. What are the requirements for constructing Olympic venues? Research the athletic infrastructure of your country. Using your imagination make a model or a sketch of a stadium in which you would like to practice.
10. How are World Records and Olympic Records registered? Make a photo-album showing athletes from various countries that have achieved such records.
11. How long have women athletes participated in the Olympic Games and in what kind of sports do they mostly excel and why? Play a women-only Olympic sport with your party.
12. Find out how many women and men athletes participated in the last Olympic Games and compare this figure with the respective number of athletes who participated in the Olympic Games of Athens 1896. Research how much the participation of men and women athletes has changed during all these years.



## TEMPLE (Spirit)

1. Find an imaginative way to tell the history of the Olympic Games, in ancient and contemporary times, to your group, class or team.
2. Make up a photo-album narrating the history of the Olympic Games and present it in an original way to your group, class or team.
3. Find out and make a list of differences in sports and organization between the Olympic Games in ancient Greece and contemporary Games. Point out elements of the Games that have endured throughout the centuries. Find three people who are interested in the subject and play sports of the ancient Games with them.
4. Fair play, self-esteem, leadership and fitness skills are all qualities of a successful athlete. Do a treasure hunt to promote those qualities to your group, patrol, team, etc.
5. Ask older people about their memories of any sporting event or Olympic Games that they experienced either as athletes or as spectators and list the events they most vividly remember. Present your material in an original way.
6. Find information about an unpleasant political event related to the Olympic Games. Imagine that you have the power to change this history by turning back time. What would you have done to preserve the spirit of the Games?
7. What values did athletes have at ancient Olympic Games and which values do the athletes of today have? Are they similar or different? Organize a debate with your party or any other group with this subject.
8. Learn to sing the International Olympic Hymn (song) in any language you want. Create a small choir and sing it.
9. Who wrote the verses and who composed the music of the International Olympic Hymn (song)? Put together a presentation e.g. board, cassette, video, web page, newsletter etc. of your findings.
10. What is the Olympic symbol and its meaning? Make the symbol of the Olympic Games using five different materials and decorate your house or meeting place. Alternatively run, swim, cycle, sail, paddle, walk or ride a course that fits the shape of the Olympic symbol.
11. Compose a poem or a short text representing the principles contained in the Olympic idea and the Athlete's Oath. Run a 4 x 400m relay race and speak the Athlete's Oath when passing the baton.
12. Together with your friends simulate the Lighting Ceremony of the Olympic Flame. Use all your imagination and creativity in the design of the stage scenery, costumes, music and speeches.
13. What value do you think the Olympic medals have and why (athletic, spiritual, cultural, material, social, economic)? Play five kinds of games with a ball and make a medal to give to the winning team or person.
14. What is the relationship between the Olympic Spirit and the values of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting? Play a treasure hunt to find at least five of the similarities and differences that exist.



### THEATRE (Soul)

1. What honours do Olympic Medallists enjoy in different countries. Compare these with the honours they enjoyed in Ancient Greece. What is your personal opinion? Organise a debate on this issue.
2. At what price and what sacrifice can an athlete become an Olympic Medallist? Which legitimate and illegitimate means are used? What is your opinion about this? Discuss it with a trainer or a coach of any Olympic sport.
3. Try to follow the lifestyle of an athlete (nutrition, training, sleeping habits etc) for a week, or imagine it and present your notes to your group.
4. Draw a stamp or a commemorative coin or banknote for the occasion of the 2096 Olympic Games. Create and play a sport of the future.
5. Run a triathlon to promote the idea of volunteering among youngsters for organizing sporting events in your community.
6. Imagine that the next Olympic Games is going to take place in your country. Draw up how you would like your country to be presented. What would you like to change, what would you like to protect, what would you like to draw attention to and what would you like to hide? Why?
7. Imagine that you had the opportunity to speak with the President of the International Olympic Committee, an Olympic Medallist or any other famous athlete. What would you tell her/him as a child/young person? What game would you play with her/him?
8. Chose an Olympic sport of your liking. Each member of your patrol pretends to be an athlete from a different region of the world, without a common language to communicate amongst each other. You pretend to be the organiser. Run this sport in equal and fair terms for all athletes.
9. Explore artists that have been inspired by the Olympic Games and make a presentation of their work actively.
10. Research three women-athletes that, according to your opinion, have changed the history of the Olympics in sport and present their achievements.
11. Play a team sport, such as rugby, soccer or basketball in your community to promote the message of peace of the Olympic Games.
12. Why was truce enforced during the Olympic Games in Ancient Greece? What happens in contemporary Olympic Games? Organise a debate on this subject within your group.
13. Look into the history of the ancient and contemporary Olympic Games for cases where truce turned into an opportunity for peace. Think how organising the next Olympic Games could contribute to the solution of an international problem or crisis. Make a resolution with your team or group to pass it on to your local authorities.
14. What role does the mascot play at the Olympic Games? What does it express, or represent and what purpose does it serve?
15. Find the mascots of at least two Olympic Games and present them to your group.



## OLYMPIC SPIRIT AT A GLANCE

**Peace** is elaborated through the idea of World Truce during every event of the Olympic Games. Nations can only compete at the Olympic Games if they cease fire for the duration of the Games.

**Physical education** and cultivation of sports for young people, respect and care for the human body.

**Participation:** The Olympic spirit – regardless of where the actual Olympic Games take place - shows the global opportunity to motivate participation in any kind of sporting event, formal or informal.

Through participation people find a way to live the spirit of the Games at a personal level and achieve satisfaction and spiritual/physical development.

The Olympic Games inspire and promote volunteerism

## OLYMPIC GAMES

(This text has been taken from the Athens 2004 Olympic Games official web site: [www.athens2004.com](http://www.athens2004.com))

The long journey of the Olympic Games began more than 2,700 years ago. Records of Olympic history show that the ancient Olympic Games were held in Greece as early as in 776 BC. It was then that the basis of the Olympic Movement began to evolve into a philosophy of life: exalting and combining the qualities of body, will, and mind in a balanced whole. Out of this philosophy the Olympic Ideals were born, placing noble competition, sport, peace, culture, and education at the very core of Greek civilization.

In 1896 the first Modern Olympic Games were held in Athens and for more than a century they have been on a journey around the world. Now, at the dawn of the 3rd millennium, the Games are returning to the country of their birth and the city of their revival. In 2004, Greece will be called upon to empower the Olympic Movement once again, placing sport at the service of peace.

The 2004 Olympic Games will be held from 13 to 29 August 2004. The competition schedule includes 28 Olympic sports that will be held at 37 venues.

*“As in the daytime there is no star in the sky warmer and brighter than the sun, likewise there is no competition greater than the Olympic Games.”* Pindar, Greek lyric poet, 5th century bc.

This view of the Olympic Games has its roots in ancient Greece. Early historic records date the first Ancient Olympic Games to 776 BC, when the core values of Olympism first began to develop into benchmarks of human creativity and excellence. Over the centuries, the Games would illuminate examples of extraordinary achievement. They would become the stage for the celebration of noble competition and the educational value of sport until 393 AD, when the Emperor Theodosius abolished them for being “too pagan”.

In 1896, thanks to the great efforts of Frenchman Pierre de Coubertin, Dimitrios Vikelas, and other contributors, the first Modern Olympic Games were held in the country of their birth. The Greek nation and the whole world embraced their revival and once again turned them into the greatest celebration on earth. In the following century the Games travelled to countries around the world, encountering a wide range of cultures and civilizations, facing new challenges, growing, and evolving.



According to historic records, the first ancient Olympic Games can be traced back to 776 BC. They were dedicated to the Olympian Gods and were staged on the ancient plains of Olympia, famous for its magnificent temples of the gods Zeus and Hera. They initially had a religious character and combined a number of ancient sporting events, many of which were based on ancient Greek myths.

The ancient Games actually occupied an important position in the life of our ancestors. An Olympiad was a time unit, measuring the four-year interval between two Games. Participants came to compete from every corner of the Greek world aiming at the ultimate prize: an olive wreath and a “heroic” return to their city-states. But apart from the glorious victory, it was the Olympic values themselves which accorded special meaning to the Games: noble competition and the effort to combine body, will, and mind in a balanced whole.

As the Games developed, so did a set of procedures such as a standardized schedule of events and the practice of the Olympic Truce. They continued for nearly 12 centuries, until Emperor Theodosius decreed, in 393 AD, that all such “pagan cults” be banned. He asserted that the Games placed an excessive public focus on athletic and spiritual affairs and abolished them

## Ancient Olympia

Olympia, the site of the Ancient Olympic Games, is in the western part of the Peloponnese which, according to Greek mythology, is the island of “Pelops”, the founder of the Olympic Games. Imposing temples, votive buildings, elaborate shrines and ancient sporting facilities were combined in a site of unique natural and mystical beauty.

Olympia functioned as a meeting place for worship and other religious and political practices as early as the 10th century BC. The central part of Olympia was dominated by the majestic temple of Zeus, while parallel to it was the temple of Hera. The ancient Stadium in Olympia could accommodate more than 40,000 spectators, while in the surrounding area there were auxiliary buildings which developed gradually up to the 4th century BC and were used as training sites for the athletes or to house the judges of the Games.

## Recent history of Olympia

The ancient site of Olympia, buried under river-silt until its rediscovery in 1766, wasn't a significant site for explorations and excavations until the early 1800s. Under the leadership of the German archaeologist Ernst Curtius the site revealed many treasures, including a splendid sculpture of Hermes retrieved from the temple of Hera. Some historians contend that Curtius, inspired by his marvellous findings at Olympia, made the initial suggestion to revive the ancient Olympic Games – an idea brought to fruition by Baron Pierre de Coubertin of France.

Today, the site hosts the Olympic Academy, a centre for the practical and theoretical study of the International Olympic Movement.

## Sporting events

The Ancient Olympic Games included the following events.

The **Pentathlon** became a Olympic sport with the addition of wrestling in 708 BC and included the following:



### Running

Athletes first wore a loin-cloth around their waist and later competed naked. The one exception was the race in armour, in which runners carried a shield, a helmet, and shin plates (*oplitis dromos*).

Running contests included:

- the *stadion* or *stade* race which was the pre-eminent test of speed, covering the Olympia track from one end to the other (200 m foot race);
- the *diavlos* (two *stades* – 400m foot race);
- *dolichos* (ranging between 7 and 24 *stades*).

### Jumping

Athletes used stone or lead weights called *halteres* to increase the distance of a jump. They held onto the weights until the end of their flight, and then jettisoned them backwards. A flute player, whose sounds underlined the rhythm and musical flow of properly executed jump, at times accompanied the athletes.

**Discus throw** (mentioned by Homer as one of the Games Achilles, held in honour of Patroclus).

The Discus was originally made of stone and later of iron, lead or bronze. The technique was very similar to today's freestyle discus throw.

**Javelin throw** (also mentioned by Homer as one of the Games Achilles, held in honour of Patroclus)

Athletes attached a thong (leather strap) that formed a loop at the javelin's centre of gravity, to make the grip more secure and stabilize the javelin in flight. There were two events that involved the javelin throw: one was for distance and the other for accuracy.

**Wrestling** was highly valued as a form of military exercise without weapons. It ended only when one of the contestants admitted defeat.

**Boxing** was added to the Games in 688 BC. It was mentioned by Homer and the god Apollo is considered to be its founder. Boxers wrapped straps (*himantes*) around their hands to strengthen their wrists and steady their fingers. At first these straps were soft, but as time progressed boxers started using hard leather straps, often causing the disfiguring of their opponent's face.

**Pankration** was added to the Games in 648 BC. It was a primitive form of martial art combining wrestling and boxing, and was considered to be one of the toughest sports. Greeks believed that it was founded by Theseus when he defeated the fierce Minotaur in the labyrinth.

**Equestrian Events** included horse races and chariot races and took place in the Hippodrome, a wide, level, open space. Poseidon, the patron deity of the equestrian competitions, is said to have sired the famous horse Areion with which Herakles defeated Kyknos, the son of Ares, in a horse race at Troizen.

### Olympic myths

A number of Greek myths are directly connected to the ancient Olympic Games and add a symbolic dimension to them. According to the ancient Greeks, Greek heroes and gods were the ones who held the very first Games. Many depictions of these mythical figures and races can be found at the 5th century pediment and metopes of the Zeus temple in Olympia.

According to an Olympian Ode written by Pindar in the 5th century BC, Pelops, the son of Tantalus, came from Asia Minor to Peloponnese to compete in a chariot race organised by Oenomaos, the king of Pisa in Peloponnese. During the race he killed King Oenomaos and later married his daughter, Hippodameia. Mythology has it that that young Pelops started organising the Games to purify himself or to thank the gods for his victory. For the same reasons, Hipodameia is known for the institution of the Herea Games.



Other myths attribute the first Olympic Games to Heracles, the mythical figure who is known for organising foot races and later crowning the victors with a wreath of wild olive leaves. In addition, the notion of 'athlos', the highest level of achievement based on physical and moral virtues, has been associated with the deeds of Heracles.

## Olympic prizes

The glory of participation and achievement:

*"When the Persian military officer Tigranes heard that the prize was not money but a crown (of olives), he could not hold his peace, but cried, 'Good heavens, Moardonius, what kind of men are these that you have pitted us against? It is not for money they contend but for glory of achievement!'"* Herodotus, Histories, 8.26.3

It was indeed this glory of achievement that characterised the ancient Olympic Games. Olympic victors shared in the divine splendor and fame of the first mythical heroes. Victory was considered to be the highest honor a mortal could attain.

Such was the level of acclaim given to victors that three-time winners at the ancient Games often had statues of themselves erected. The most renowned poets of the time, such as Pindar, Bacchylides and Simonides, were commissioned to celebrate these victories with odes, known as Epinicians. Winners also received various prestigious gifts such as exemption from taxation, while special coins were struck to commemorate equestrian victories.

## The award ceremony

The Olympic winner received his first awards immediately after the competition. Following the announcement of the winner's name by the herald, a *Hellanodikis* (Greek judge) would place a palm tree branch on his hands, while the spectators cheered and threw flowers at him. Red ribbons were tied on his head and hands as a mark of victory.

The official award ceremony would take place on the last day of the Games at the elevated vestibule of the Temple of Zeus. In a loud voice, the herald would announce the name of the Olympic winner, his father's name, and his homeland. Then, the Hellanodikis placed the sacred olive tree wreath, called *kotinos*, on the winner's head. According to Phlegon, a Greek author of the 2nd century AD, the wreath of olive leaves was first instituted in 752 BC, on the advice of the Oracle at Delphi. All spectators were welcome at the award ceremony to participate in the festive and emotional celebration.

## Revival: Modern Olympic Games

In the 19th century intellectuals such as Evangelos Zappas and Demetrios Vikelas who believed in the spirit of noble contests and the Olympic ideals lent their voices and efforts to the revival of the Olympic Games. However, it was French Baron Pierre de Coubertin who orchestrated the re-establishment of the Games by advocating the marriage of sports and Greek classicism and leading the way to the first Modern Olympic Games in 1896.

From the very beginning the Greek public embraced the revival and joined the efforts to organise the Games. Any financial difficulties faced by the Greek state at the time were met through the mobilisation of people and benefactors alike. The marble renovation of the ancient Panathinaikon Stadium that hosted the first modern Games was financed by George Averoff, a Greek benefactor from Northern Greece. With the revival of the Olympic Games a number of symbolic Olympic Traditions were also developed

and established (i.e. the Olympic Anthem, the Olympic Creed, the Olympic Flag, the Olympic Oath, the Olympic Flame and Torch, the Olympic Truce).

Over the years, the Olympic Games have travelled to different countries and continents, and in 2004 they will return to the country of their birth and the city of their revival for the hosting of the XXVIII Modern Olympic Games.

## Olympic Traditions

### The Olympic Anthem

The Olympic anthem was written by the Greek national poet Costis Palamas and composed by the Greek musician Spiros Samaras. It was first sung at the 1896 Games. The IOC adopted it as the official Olympic anthem to crown Olympic ceremonies at the 1958 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

### The Olympic Creed

The Olympic creed was also introduced at the 1896 Games. As stated by Pierre de Coubertin, the creed is as follows: "The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well."

### The Olympic Flag

It was Pierre de Coubertin who conceived the idea of the Olympic flag with five coloured interlocking rings on a white background. The rings represent the union of the five continents and the meeting of the athletes from all around the world at the Olympic Games.

Today, almost a century after the flag's creation, the six colours – those of the rings (blue, yellow, black, green, red) and that of the white background which stands for peace – still maintain their symbolism and can be found in flags across the world. The Olympic flag was first used during the Antwerp Games in 1920.

### The Olympic Oath

*"In the name of all the competitors, I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honour of our teams."*

At the Opening Ceremony of each Games, one athlete from the host country takes the Olympic oath on behalf of all competing athletes. This particular gesture of sportsmanship was introduced at the 1920 Games in Antwerp, Belgium. A coach or team official takes a similar oath at each Opening Ceremony.

### The Olympic Flame

The Olympic flame is one of the most visible symbols of the modern Games. Its tradition has survived from the Games of ancient Greece, where a sacred flame, ignited by the sun, burned continually on the altar of the goddess Hera.

The modern Olympic flame was first lit in 1928 at the Amsterdam Olympic Games, where it burned throughout the competitions. It has become a major symbol for solidarity among nations and embodies the Olympic spirit encompassing the ideals of purity, the endeavour for perfection and the struggle for victory, friendship and peace.



### **The Torch Relay**

During the 1896 Games in Athens, young inspired sportsmen had organised the first torch relays. However, the tradition of the Olympic torch officially began at the Berlin Games in 1936. As in ancient times, the torch is lit by the sun in Ancient Olympia, then passed from runner to runner in a relay to the host city, where it is used to light the Olympic Stadium's flame during the Games' Opening Ceremony. The flame then burns until it is extinguished at the Closing Ceremony.

The Olympic Torch Relay passes the Olympic flame from runner to runner starting in Olympia, Greece and ending in the stadium of the city hosting the Games. The lighting ceremony is held in Ancient Olympia. In a traditional ancient ritual the High Priestess receives the Olympic Flame from the sun's rays focused in a concave mirror. Once the flame is lit and blessed, it is then handed over to the first torchbearer. The long voyage of the torch begins.

The Olympic torch is the primary symbol of the Olympic ideal: noble competition, friendship, and peaceful coexistence.

### **INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET**

More information about the Olympic Games may be found at the following websites:

[www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org)

[www.athens2004.com](http://www.athens2004.com)

[www.olympictruce.org](http://www.olympictruce.org)

[www.olympiceducation.gr](http://www.olympiceducation.gr)

[www.paralympic.org](http://www.paralympic.org)

[www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org)

<http://www.blues.uab.es/olympic.studies/>

