



Olympic Special



## The rebirth of the Games

The inauguration of the first Games of the modern era, opened by King George I at the foot of the Acropolis on April 5, 1896, was a huge relief for Baron Pierre de Coubertin. Greece's instability and economic stature, due to numerous conflicts, proved almost insurmountable obstacles. However, a rich Greek from Alexandria, George Averoff, donated a gift of one million drachmas and in a matter of 18 months a superb white marble stadium, able to hold 60,000 people, was constructed. Baron de Coubertin's dream of reinventing the Games was one he had coveted since 1892 - two years later the official announcement was made and Athens chosen as the site. Almost 300 athletes, two-thirds of whom were Greek, from fourteen countries and three continents arrived in Athens, although the Games were not widely covered by the Press. Nine sports were included in the programme between April 6 - 15: athletics, cycling, fencing, gymnastics, wrestling, swimming, weightlifting, tennis and shooting. An American Harvard student, James Connolly, became the first Olympic champion of the modern era on the first day of the Games, winning the triple jump with a leap of 13.71 metres.



SYDNEY, Sept 23 (AFP): Schedule for Sunday, Day 9 at the Sydney Olympics.

- ATHLETICS**  
Olympic Stadium  
Men's 800m semifinals, Women's 5,000m final, Men's 400m semifinals, Women's 400m semifinals, Women's 800m Final.
- FOOTBALL**  
Bruce Stadium, Canberra  
Women's semifinal  
Sydney Football Stadium  
Women's semifinal
- HOCKEY**  
State Hockey Centre  
Women's Medal Pool  
Men's preliminaries (Great Britain v Canada) (Poland v South Korea)
- TENNIS**  
Tennis centre  
Men's Singles third round, women's singles quarterfinals, men's doubles quarterfinals, women's doubles second round
- ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS**  
BASEBALL  
BASKETBALL  
BEACH VOLLEYBALL  
BOXING  
MOUNTAIN BIKE  
DIVING  
FENCING  
HANDBALL  
ROWING  
SAILING  
SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING  
TABLE TENNIS  
VOLLEYBALL  
WATER POLO  
WEIGHTLIFTING



SO PREDICTABLE: US track queen Marion Jones crossing the finish-line of the women's 100 metres sprint final yesterday. —AFP photo

## Magic-on Jones

### ATHLETICS

SYDNEY, Sept 23: American sprint sensation Marion Jones won her first ever Olympic gold with a shattering display here in the women's 100 metres on a chilly Saturday evening, reports

AFP. The 24-year-old world champion clocked 10.75 to head off the challenge from Greece's silver medalist Ekaterini Thanou and bronze winner Tanya Lawrence of Jamaica.

Jones, going for a record-

busting five track and field titles here, broke into a huge smile as she swept across the line to the roars of the 100,000 strong crowd packed into Stadium Australia.

Seconds later her smile turned to tears of joy as she hugged friends in the crowd before starting a lap of honour with the American flag and for some of the way she also carried the flag of Belize - the land of some of her ancestors.

It was a brilliant Olympic debut for the former basketball star who turned down a chance to compete in the US 4x100 relay team at the Barcelona Games in 1992, claiming she was not ready.

Jones has not lost a 100m race since 1997 and she never looked like losing her record here as she ran her fastest 100m of the year.

So confident was Jones that she blew a kiss to the crowd during the pre-race introductions.

But her concentration was fully tested. Just before the starters gun was about to fire Debbie Ferguson of the Bahamas raised her hand to delay the start. Then Thanou had a false start. The race got underway at the third attempt.

"It's a dream come true," said Jones afterwards. "It's finally here. I have dreamed about this for 19 years. Now for the other four."

For veteran Merlene Ottey, making her sixth and final appearance in an Olympics in a career that started in Moscow in 1980, there was to be no final glory.

The 40-year-old had caused a storm amongst her Jamaican teammates when she was selected for the Olympic team.

Ottey finished fourth in the trials but was given a place anyway.

She was determined to prove her critics wrong but in the end Ottey could only manage fourth as age finally caught up with her.

"It was good to get this far. A lot of people, including Jamaicans did not think I could," she said.



LIONS KILL THE SAMBA: Cameroon's Pierre Wome (L) heads under pressure from Roger of Brazil during their men's football quarterfinal at Brisbane yesterday. Hot favourites Brazil went out after a 1-2 defeat. —AFP photo

## Samba silenced

### FOOTBALL

SYDNEY, Sept 23: The United States and Cameroon reached the last four of the Olympic men's football tournament in dramatic fashion here Saturday, where they were joined by Spain and Chile, reports AFP.

The US defeated Japan 5-4 in a penalty shoot-out after a thrilling 2-2 draw, while Modeste Mbami's golden goal gave the Africans victory over tournament favourites Brazil.

The United States now meet Spain, who defeated European rivals Italy 1-0, while Cameroon face Chile, 4-1 victors over Nigeria.

CAMEROON - 2;  
BRAZIL - 1

BRISBANE: An extra-time golden goal from Modeste Mbami sealed victory for Cameroon, who were reduced to nine-men after the dismissals of Geremi Njitap Fotso and Aaron Ngumbat.

Brazil had grabbed an equaliser through a Ronaldinho free-kick at the end of normal time.

Patrick Mboma had given the Indomitable Lions a 1-0 lead on 17 minutes which they defended successfully until Ronaldinho's last-gasp curling free kick forced extra-time.

"I told them we could still win the game with nine if we organised ourselves," said Cameroon coach Jean-Paul Akouo.

"Cameroon is very aggressive and I think the best way to play is to attack."

CHILE - 4; NIGERIA - 1

MELBOURNE: Rodrigo Tello played a starring role as the South Americans wrapped up the game with a three-goal blitz before the interval to set up a date in the last four with Cameroon.

Tello set up two goals and grabbed the fourth for himself sending the huge Chilean contingent in the 44,425 crowd wild.

In the 17th minute his free-kick from the left-wing was met with a deft header by Pablo Contreras to make it 1-0.

Less than a minute later the lead was doubled and Tello was again the provider.

The 20-year-old crossed from the left and Ivan Zamorano took advantage of hesita-

## Golden Greene

### ATHLETICS

SYDNEY, Sept 23: World record holder Maurice Greene lived up to his promise when he powered across the line to take the Olympic 100 metre gold here on Saturday, reports AFP.

Despite the chilly conditions, the brash American who never doubted that the Blue Riband title was always going to be his, came home in 9.87 to head off Ato Boldon of Trinidad and Tobago and Obadele Thompson of Barbados.

Greene had to overcome a sluggish start, but his strength told over the final 20 metres and neither Boldon nor Thompson were close enough to threaten. Boldon clocked 9.99 and Thompson 10.04.

Greene's victory makes him only the third sprinter to hold the Olympic title, the world championship and the world record at the same time - only Carl Lewis and Donovan Bailey had previously managed the triple.

"Four years ago in Atlanta I sat in the stands and cried. Those were tears of misery. Those you see now are tears of joy," said an emotional Greene afterwards.

And he had nothing but praise for teammate Boldon.

"Ato pushed me all the way," he said.

The 26-year-old Greene's success spelt heartache for Boldon who is still trying to get out of the shadow of his training partner.

The Commonwealth Games' champion took bronze in Atlanta but remained convinced that he deserved more. But despite a blistering performance in the first round of the heats he again failed to deliver the killer blow when it mattered and had to settle for silver.

But the 26-year-old Boldon put a brave face on his performance.

"You know what. There were eight guys at Atlanta. Guess who was the only one to make it back - me," he said.

"I would have been a bit surprised to win gold but I wasn't going to give it away just because the experts said I had no chance. I guess I just don't know how to run the 100m - but I sure as hell know how to run the 200m," he added.

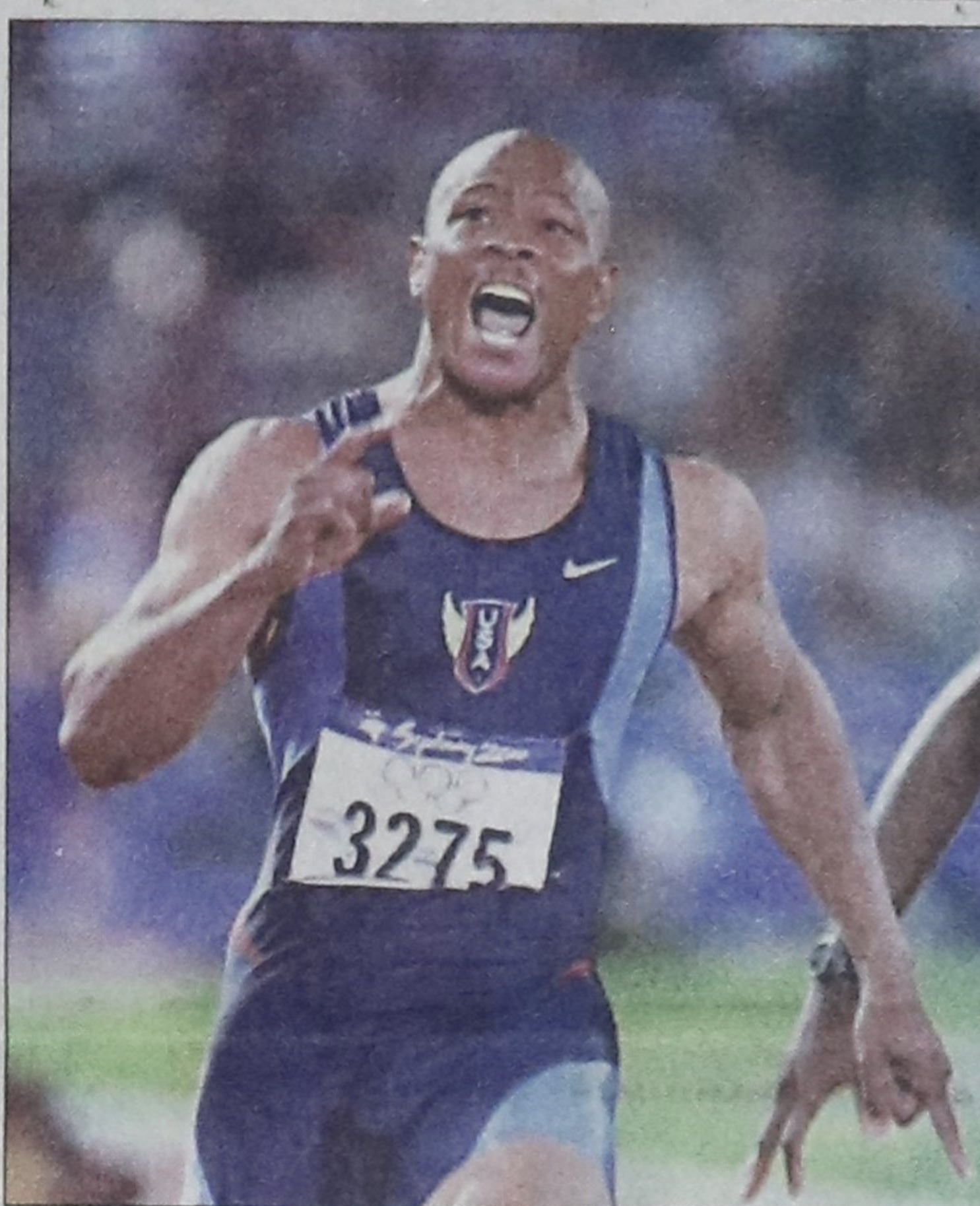
The two sprinters hugged seconds after the race before Greene broke away, tore off his shoes decorated with the stars and stripes, and threw them into the 100,000 strong crowd.

packed into the Stadium Australia before going on his lap of honour.

For the 24-year-old Thompson, it was a dream come true. His best previous showing has been fourth in the world championships in Seville last year. But he remained disap-

pointed at his showing as he looked back over his race.

"It was short and full of mistakes. I dipped on the line and said 'please let me be second'. It was just the usual Obadele bad start but hey - Obadele Thompson has the Olympic bronze," he said.



KEEPING HIS WORDS: Maurice Greene, who had promised to win the gold in the men's 100 metres sprint, keeps that vow at the Olympic Stadium in Sydney yesterday. The US ace won the event's final with a timing of 9.87 sec. —AFP photo

## US rule the waves

### SWIMMING

SYDNEY, Sept 23: Inge de Bruijn grabbed a third gold and Grant Hackett defeated a legend to earn his first, but America underscored their supremacy Saturday by closing the Olympic swimming with a brace of relay records, reports AFP.

"This symbolises the strength of the team throughout the meet, and it's a vindication of the first relay," Gary Hall said after he anchored the United States to victory in the 4x100m medley relay in a world record time of 3min 33.73sec.

The United States had conceded the 4x100m free relay title to Australia, their first defeat in the event in Olympic competition, on the first day.

But over the course of the eight-day meet they surged past Australia and the dazzling Dutch duo of de Bruijn and

Pieter van den Hoogenband to finish with 33 medals, 14 of them gold.

Their relay records took the total of world records broken or equalled in the Olympic meet to 15.

Double backstroke gold medalist Lenny Krayzelburg, breaststroke silver medalist Ed Moses, Ian Crocker and 50m free co-champion Hall won in 3:33.73, slicing more than a second off the previous record of 3:34.84 set by the United States in Atlanta.

Australia's Matthew Welsh, Regan Harrison, Geoff Huegill and Michael Klim took silver in 3:25.27 and Germany got the bronze in 3:35.88.

BJ Bedford, 100m breaststroke champion Megan Quann, Jenny Thompson and Dara Torres won the women's race in 3:58.30, crushing the previous record of 4:01.67 set by China in 1994.

Australia's Dyanne Calub, Leisel Jones, Petria Thomas and Susie O'Neill were also inside the old record, taking the silver in 4:01.59.

O'Neill, who bows out of Olympic competition for good having won the 200m free gold, but with only silver in her signature 200m butterfly, called the relay "The most fun I've had in my life."

"I just wanted to enjoy the last swim I'd have at the Olympics," she said. "It was pretty emotional."

Mai Nakamura, Masami Tanaka, Junko Onishi and Sumika Minamoto gave Japan the bronze in 4:04.16.

Thompson claimed her eighth Olympic gold medal - all from relays and three of those at these Games. She also owns an individual silver and this week won 100m freestyle bronze for a total of 10 Olympic medals.

See page 15



DIVING IN SPACE! Russians Dimitri Snautine (L) and Igor Loukacheine performing a pike in tandem during the men's synchronised 10 metres platform diving final at the Sydney International Aquatic Centre yesterday. Russia won the gold. —AFP photo



SYDNEY, Sept 23 (AFP): Final updated Olympic medal table Saturday.

C	G	S	B	T
USA	20	12	18	50
China	17	11	11	39
Australia	10	16	11	37
France	10	10	5	25
Italy	9	4	11	24
Russia	8	8	12	28
Netherlands	7	3	3	13
Romania	6	2	4	12
Germany	4	6	12	22
South Korea	4	5	7	16
Japan	4	4	4	12
Ukraine	3	6	4	13
Great Britain	3	6	3	12
Sweden	3	2	1	6
Bulgaria	3	2	0	5
Poland	2	3	0	5
Cuba	2	2	2	6
Czech Rep	2	1	3	6
Hungary	2	1	1	4
Spain	2	0	2	4
Slovenia	2	0	0	2
Turkey	2	0	0	2
Switzerland	1	5	1	7
Indonesia	1	3	2	6
Greece	1	3	1	5
Slovakia	1	3	1	5
Belarus	1	1	6	8
Canada	1	1	3	5
Finland	1	1	0	2
Mexico	1	1	0	2
Lithuania	1	0	1	2
New Zealand	1	0	1	2
Azerbaijan	1	0	0	1
Colombia	1	0	0	1
Croatia	1	0	0	1
Brazil	0	2	1	3
Denmark	0	2	0	2
Belgium	0	1	2	3
North Korea	0	1	1	2
Norway	0	1	1	2
South Africa	0	1	1	2
Chinese Taipei	0	1	1	2
Moldova	0	1	0	1
Nigeria	0	1	0	1
Trinidad	0	1	0	1
Uruguay	0	1	0	1
Yugoslavia	0	1	0	1
Costa Rica	0	0	2	2
Estonia	0	0	2	2
Georgia	0	0	2	2
Armenia	0	0	1	1
Barbados	0	0	1	1
India	0	0	1	1
Jamaica	0	0	1	1
Kyrgyzstan	0	0	1	1
Kuwait	0	0	1	1
Latvia	0	0	1	1
Portugal	0	0	1	1
Thailand	0	0	1	1

## Priceless shoe

SYDNEY, Sept 23: A 20-year-old Australian jeweller is taking home the sporting memento of the Sydney Games after catching the shoe 100m gold medalist Maurice Greene threw into the crowd at Stadium Australia Saturday, reports AFP.

After winning the race the American took off both shoes and tossed one into the frenzied crowd at the western end of the stadium where Ben Harper went up for the catch.

"Somebody juggled it and as soon as I touched it I gripped it. I wasn't going to let it go," said Harper, holding the shoe tightly as spectators gathered around him snapping photos.

"I'm gonna keep it forever," he added. "It's the memento of a lifetime."

The shoe is decorated with the stars and stripes of the United States flag. The base and spikes are coated in gold.

"Twenty four carat gold," laughed the apprentice jeweller.

## Wilson could be out of it

SYDNEY, Sept 23: World record holder Wilson Kipketer survived the fright of his brief Olympic life when he almost crashed out of his opening 800m race here on Saturday, reports AFP.

The 27-year-old Kenyan-born Dane became tangled up in the middle of the pack after the first 150 metres and got his leg clipped, throwing him off balance. He managed to stay on his feet as Jamaica's Marvin Watts crashed to the track in front of him.

Kipketer, robbed of a certain gold four years ago in Atlanta when the Kenyans refused to approve his switch on nationality, quickly regained his poise and ran out an easy winner with one of the fastest heat times.

His 1min 45.57secs was well outside his world record but was enough to show that despite a miserable season to date his dreams of gold were still alive.



"It has been four years of hard work. I had a good feeling all week and I knew it was going to go well," said Redgrave who is bettered only by Hungarian fencer Aladar Gerevich who won six gold medals between 1932 and 1960. "It was close, but that does."