

PRESS INFORMATION



Gliding and the Olympics

The spirit of the Modern Olympiad has been with us for over 100 years now and yet, as history testifies, aviation has largely been forgotten in the most spectacular and biggest sporting event in the world.

The Olympics is an event that everyone on this earth can relate to. It is the spirit, the comradeship, the challenge of all men and women at their best, and has played a significant part in quite literally transforming some sports and, in some cases, contributing to the very survival of others into the 21st Century.

Although gliding, like all other forms of air sport, is not an Olympic sport, it was not always out in the cold. Turn back the clocks, and one may be surprised to learn that gliding's Olympic history goes as far back as 1932. At the International Olympic Committee's annual conference in Los Angeles, just before the start of the Xth Olympiad, there was a strong desire for the innovative and invigorating new sport of gliding to become part of the modern Olympic Games.

With this burning desire, gliding was introduced to the 1936 Berlin Games as a demonstration sport and the future of Olympic gliding looked rosy indeed. In March 1938 at the IOC's Annual Conference, gliding was finally formally

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accepted into the Olympic programme as an alternative sport. The race was now on.

However, things did not go according to plan. With the ill-fated 1940 Games succumbing to war, world events were to relegate gliding to the annals of Olympic history.