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Welcome...

Welcome to Love Sport, Lancashire's new, exciting, sports magazine that's dedicated to sport and nothing but sport.

Love Sport is a celebration of the excitement, drama and spectacle of sport. We're not here to dish dirt or write, sneering know-all articles written with the benefit of hindsight and a seat on the sidelines. We stand with the fans, cheering on the efforts of our athletes, footballers et al. Love Sport will bring you facts, figures and fun from the world of sport - local, national and international.

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EDITOR: Nick Robinson
nick@lovesportonline.co.uk



Love Sport editor Nick Robinson has been reporting on and photographing major sporting events for years. He's also a sports fanatic. "There isn't a single sport that I don't enjoy," he says. "Not one. Tennis, football, cricket, golf, athletics, I love them all. That's what Love Sport is all about - sharing and celebrating the fantastic world of sport. And we're free to access, in print or online."

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THE FLAME THAT REFUSED TO BE DOUSED



Britain's streets have been thronged throughout June and July with vast hordes of people cheering the Olympic Torch, as 8,000-plus torchbearers have carried the Olympic Flame through Britain and Ireland. The torrential rain that has drenched the country has been no obstacle to the crowds, who have turned out in their thousands to hail the standard bearers of the 2012 Games. Here are a selection of the scenes:



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THE BIRTH OF THE OLYMPICS



The ancient Olympic Games ran from 776 BC to 393 AD, before Emperor Theodosius had them banned because of their association with pagan practices.

A popular myth has it that the Games were established by Heracles in honour of his father Zeus, legend claiming that after completing his twelve labours he built the Olympic stadium as a testament to Zeus. Having finished stadium, he walked for 200 steps and called this distance a stadion, which became a unit of distance and henceforth the word stadium was born. Another myth states that the Olympics formed a period of truce. Whatever the origin, an inscription at Olympia definitely asserts that a footrace was held every four years, beginning in 776.

The first Games featured running events, a pentathlon (running, javelin, discus, jumping and wrestling) boxing, wrestling, equestrian events and a sport called pankration. The Games were held every four years and this period became known as an Olympiad, which the Greeks used as a time measurement.

After 393 the Games faded into history until the mid-19th century. An English doctor, William Brookes, decided to revive the Games in 1850. The location he chose was the little town of Much Wenlock in Shropshire (hence the Olympic mascot Wenlock). Dr. Brookes' Games became known as the Wenlock Olympic Games.

At about the same time a Greek-Romanian philanthropist, Evangelis Zappas, wrote to King Otto of Greece in 1856, offering to revive the Greek Olympic Games. Zappas helped to refurbish the Panathinaikos stadium and the Games were held in both 1870 and 1875.

Having attended the Wenlock Olympian Games, a Frenchman, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, built on the work of Zappas and Brookes by helping to establish an International Olympic Committee. He suggested rotating sites internationally and the first Modern Games were in 1896. The next two were a bit of a non-event generally, but women competed for the first time in 1900, at Paris.

1908 saw the Games happen in London for the first time and from there the popularity has soared.

A THOUSAND YEARS WITHOUT SPORT

Can you imagine a world without sport? All that passion, drama, colour and excitement simply not present in our lives? That was how life was for century after century – no football, athletics, racing, boxing, golf, not even croquet. After the Ancient Olympics were shut down by Emperor Theodosius in 393, there doesn't seem to have been any significant sporting contest to take part in or watch for over a millennium.

Imagine no world records to aim at, no dreams of winning glory for your country, no super-arenas where sports fans from every nation would gather and cheer on their sporting heroes. What did everyone do with their spare time, besides watching public executions and dancing round maypoles?

The truth was that only the aristocracy had a significant amount of spare time. Only they could afford to amuse themselves at length, everyone else was too busy scratching a living. Most of their ideas of fun involved killing something, however: deer, foxes, pheasants, wild boar, although they did manage a version of indoor tennis, which is still played in suitably configured mansions. They might have experimented with the outdoor game, but no-one could be bothered to invent a lawnmower until 1830. Cattle and sheep were useful in restricting the growth of grass but had an annoying habit of ignoring designated toilet areas. Scythes also did a job but could be hazardous to small creatures and courting couples.



Time you got that grass cut, it's less than a millennium to the opening ceremony.

Strange, then, how an invention so seemingly mundane as the lawnmower could be a major driving force in the creation of international sport. The popularity of lawn sports in the 19th century increased at the same rate as the extent to which lawnmowers came to be used in improving gardens, parks and playing fields. By the end of the century sufficient countries were keen enough and good enough at sport for the Olympic Games to rise from the ashes.

Pictures: London 2012

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MEDALS HAUL



So which country sends the metal detector craziest when they get back to the airport? No prizes for guessing that it's the USA. If the all-time medals table, Summer and Winter Games, was expressed as a 100-metre sprint, America would be hitting the tape before the nearest competitor got to the halfway mark. The former USSR amassed a total of 1204 medals before it fractured into sovereign states and Germany has also sped through the 1000 mark, with a sum of 1099, but neither comes remotely close to the United States of America, who have gained a colossal tally of 2599 gold, silver and bronze discs since the Modern Games began.

Ask yourself a quick quiz question before you read on, and you probably know the question if not the answer. No texting or Googling, have a real guess. Yes, the question is where does Great Britain stand in the all-time medals table? Have you made your guess? Well, as in so many things, we punch somewhat above our weight, and our all-time position is 4th with a total of 737. Our nearest rival is our nearest neighbour; les Français weigh in with 730, just seven medals difference. But lower. Comme ci, comme ça.

The rising nation is, of course, China, who constitute the biggest threat to America's dominance. They've only competed in nine Summer Games but they won the most golds at the 2008 Games, albeit on home turf, and gained a total of 100 medals, only ten behind America's 110. Russia, too, are still a force, even without the other fourteen Socialist Republics who together formed the old USSR.

80 nations of the 204 countries who compete in the Olympics have never won a medal of any description. Amongst the 80 is the huge but strife-torn Congo, plus nations such as Albania, Jordan, Yemen, Honduras and El Salvador. Montenegro managed to draw with England at football but haven't got their foot on the medals ladder yet. Bangladesh play international Test cricket, but they too are waiting to climb the first rung. Maybe 2012 will be the year for a minor sporting nation to join the heavyweights.

ALL-TIME TOP 10 MEDAL WINNERS

| Team | No. | Gold | Silver | Bronze | No. | Gold | Silver | Bronze | Total |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| | Summer | | | | Winter | | | | |
| 1) USA | 25 | 929 | 729 | 638 | 21 | 87 | 95 | 71 | 2549 |
| 2) USSR | 9 | 395 | 319 | 296 | 9 | 78 | 57 | 59 | 1204 |
| 3) Germany | 22 | 247 | 284 | 320 | 19 | 89 | 93 | 66 | 1099 |
| 4) Great Britain | 26 | 207 | 255 | 253 | 21 | 9 | 3 | 10 | 737 |
| 5) France | 26 | 191 | 212 | 233 | 21 | 27 | 27 | 40 | 730 |
| 6) Italy | 25 | 190 | 157 | 174 | 21 | 37 | 32 | 37 | 627 |
| 7) Sweden | 25 | 142 | 160 | 173 | 21 | 48 | 33 | 48 | 604 |
| 8) East Germany | 5 | 152 | 129 | 127 | 6 | 39 | 36 | 35 | 519 |
| 9) Hungary | 24 | 159 | 141 | 159 | 21 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 465 |
| 10) Norway | 23 | 54 | 48 | 42 | 21 | 107 | 106 | 90 | 447 |

‘AND WHO CARES WHO CAME THIRD?’

David Coleman's memorable postscript to his commentary on David Hemery's 1968 gold medal run in the 400m hurdles might win a poll of commentators' gaffes - it was actually Hemery's fellow Briton John Sherwood who won the bronze - but Hemery's efforts are still remembered with affection by athletics fans 44 years later. He came fourth in the UKA poll to find athletics fans' favourite Olympic performances of the last 60 years.

Kelly Holmes' eye-popping delight at winning the 800 metres in Athens was the fans second favourite, and she even won third with her 1500 metres success at the same Games, but centre spot on the podium belongs to arguably Britain's greatest-ever athlete, Daley Thompson. Daley's world-record winning haul of 8847 points in the 1984 LA Olympics, following on from his triumph in Moscow in 1980, was voted as the favourite Olympic performance of the modern era. The decathlete who charmed everyone in Montreal with his enthusiasm became the main man in Moscow and stayed there for years, battling it out with German Jurgen Hingsen at event after event.



Daley on his way to gold

The votes for the top 20 memories were spread evenly over the decades, neither misty-eyed nor too contemporary. There were six nominations for the 2000s, including Christine Ohuruogu's 400 metres, and six for the 60s, legends like Lynn Davies and Mary Rand triggering the remembrances of voters, but the 80s shaded it with seven, the Coe and Ovett years warm in the hearts of many. Mary Peters was the sole representative of the 70s with her Munich pentathlon gold, while Chris Brasher's Melbourne 3000m steeplechase kept the 50s in the frame.

The full UK Athletics Top Gold Medal Winning Moments, as voted by fans, are:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) 1984 – Daley Thompson, Decathlon | 11) 2000 – Denise Lewis, Heptathlon |
| 2) 2004 – Kelly Holmes, 800m | 12) 1984 – Sebastian Coe, 1500 metres |
| 3) 2004 – Kelly Holmes, 1500m | 13) 1992 – Linford Christie, 100 metres |
| 4) 1968 – David Hemery, 400m hurdles | 14) 1980 – Allan Wells, 100 metres |
| 5) 1972 – Mary Peters, Pentathlon | 15) 1980 – Daley Thompson, Decathlon |
| 6) 1960 – Don Thompson, 50km walk | 16) 1964 – Ken Matthews, 20km walk |
| = 2008 – Christine Ohuruogu, 400 metres | 17) 1964 – Lynn Davies, Long Jump |
| 7) 1964 – Ann Packer, 800 metres | 18) 1984 – Tessa Sanderson, javelin |
| 8) 1980 – Steve Ovett, 800 metres | 19) 1964 – Mary Rand, Long Jump |
| = 1992 – Sally Gunnell, 400m hurdles | 20) 1956 – Chris Brasher, 3000 metres |
| 9) 2000 – Jonathan Edwards, Triple Jump | steeplechase |
| = 2004 – Men's 4x100m Relay | |
| 10) 1980 – Sebastian Coe, 1500 metres | |

LANCASTER CHURCH TO SHOW OLYMPICS

A Lancaster church is being transformed into an Olympic cafe during the Games. St. Thomas's Church on Penny Street in Lancaster is throwing open its doors all day between 10am and 5pm, where 2 big screens will be showing every minute of the action. You don't have to belong to the Church of England, you don't even have to be a Christian to come in and watch the Olympics; all are welcome.



Teams of volunteers will be serving free drinks, cake and biscuits in the family-friendly cafe and there will be a children's zone too. St. Thomas's vicar, Jon Scamman, explained why his church will be showing the Olympic Games. "Our church is here at the heart of the city and we want to throw the doors wide open. We want to welcome people in, churchgoers and people who normally never set foot inside a church, and the Olympics is a great opportunity to do that. There'll be no preaching, no 'sales pitch'; visitors will be able to come and go as they please. Nor will there be any pressure to make a donation of any kind, we're offering this service completely free of charge. For further information, contact St. Thomas's on 01524 590410 or visit www.st.tees.org.uk.

WHAT CAN YOU BUY FOR £500 MILLION THESE DAYS?

Anyone watching the hilarious TwentyTwelve over the last few months will have had all their prejudices about bungling bureaucrats reinforced as the Olympic Deliverance team have blundered from one botched initiative to another in their attempt to 'tick all the boxes' as they prepare the stage for The Greatest Show on Earth. Failed VIP visits on a bus with a bust satnav, video conferences where no-one can see or hear their fellow participants, cringe-making adherence to political correctness, while the characters themselves persist in claiming that 'It's all good.'



The reality, refreshingly, is quite different. London hasn't had any of the problems that cities like Montreal endured, where they were still installing seats while the opening ceremony was happening. Sports Minister Hugh Robertson announced three weeks before the Games that not only was everything ready and on time, it was also under budget. £500 million under budget, to be precise.

So what are the Government going to do with half a billion quid? What can you buy with that sort of cash these days? Roger Federer's bank accounts? Six and a bit Cristiano Ronaldos? What about the all-conquering Spanish football team, might they be for sale? Let's do a few sums: Casillas: top keeper, got to be worth £50m. Jordi Alba: flying full-back, £25m. Sergio Ramos: still young, pace to burn, £50m. Gerard Pique: only 25, defensive mainstay, £30m. Cesc Fabregas: happy at the Nou Camp, £35m. Xavi: 32 now, but still worth £10m. Iniesta: around a fair while but it would take £25m to prise him away from Barcelona. Arbeloa: steady defender, £10m. David Silva: silky genius, £50m. Xabi Alonso: seems to have been around for ever, but still only 30. £20m. Busquets: many goals ahead for another Barca boy. £35m. The subs bench? Well, Torres and David Villa would probably fetch £40m each, so the total outlay would be: £420 million.

The budget would run to that, £500 million should just about do it. Spain's economy could do with a cash injection and the Spanish people won't mind, they must be fed up of winning everything by now. Fast-track the Spanish-to-English citizenship process: now that you only have to know one verse of the National Anthem the rest should be a breeze, so we not only get to host the greatest Olympics ever, we've also got a team who's a shoe-in for the next World Cup. There might even be a few bob left over for a few more security guards. And a Ronaldo quiff. Picture: BBC

THE OTHER STRATFORD

The writings of William Shakespeare mean that most people who've ever picked up a book have heard of Stratford-on-Avon, the Warwickshire town voted sixth best tourist destination in the UK. But what of its namesake, the London borough that becomes the centre of sporting galaxy this July? From whence doth it get its moniker, as Shakespeare might have said.

Well, the name has the same origin; both places were once 'fords on a Roman road', but their paths have taken different directions since. Part of the London borough of Newham, Stratford was given over to agriculture until the railways transformed it into an industrial suburb. It has been a significant transport hub for some time, but the decline of the industry that caused it to grow has meant that efforts to regenerate the area have been planned for years.



Being chosen as the Olympic Park site, though, has led to a complete metamorphosis. The Olympic legacy will bequeath the largest new urban park in Europe, vast retail centres, a Premier League football ground and a new university, the initial plans for which are to try and link it with Massachusetts Institute of Technology, one of the world's foremost centres of learning.

M is the most popular Olympic letter – five cities beginning with M have hosted the Games – Melbourne, Mexico, Munich, Montreal, pictured right, and Moscow. A is one behind with four – Athens, Antwerp, Amsterdam and Atlanta. The bronze letter, appropriately, is B – Berlin, Barcelona, Beijing. L makes fourth spot, London sharing its capital letter with former hosts Los Angeles.



Pictures: Media Dialogue and LOCOG

THE ROAD TO LONDON

2012 marks the third time that London has hosted the Olympic Games. Italy was due to stage them in 1908 but Mount Vesuvius inconveniently erupted in 1906, leaving the organisers no option but to relocate. London won the nomination for 1944 against seven competing cities but World War 2 caused a postponement to 1948. Despite post-war austerity, the Games took place with a record number of competing nations, 59 in all.

After the terrorist atrocity at Munich and the financial disasters that hit Montreal, there was a distinct lack of volunteers for future Olympiads. Both Moscow and LA had no other competitors than each other, and their events were tarnished by political boycotts. By the time bidding started for 1992, however, interest was on the rise and Birmingham decided to make its case. The Midlands metropolis garnered more votes than Amsterdam but less than the rest, including eventual winners Barcelona.

An interested observer of the bidding process was adopted northerner Bob Scott. He decided that Los Angeles' demographic was similar to Manchester and thought 'why not Manchester?' His idea grew like a runaway snowball. Whoever he asked in the city seemed to think it was a great plan: "Whenever I expected a door to be closed in our face, it was opened," he said.

Manchester bid for both Atlanta in 1996 and Sydney in 2000. Although unsuccessful with the Olympic bids, they did manage to secure the 2002 Commonwealth Games for the city, and Bob Scott's initiative triggered a remarkable regeneration of Manchester.

It seemed, however, that fellow Olympic nations may only support a Great Britain bid if the Games were to be staged in the capital and the hard work towards making London's case began. With legendary gold medal winner Sebastian Coe at the forefront of the effort, Britain's bid was deemed the winner on 6th July 2005 and the race to rebuild Stratford began.





IN A DIFFERENT LEAGUE

The town of Fleetwood, home of fishermen and Fisherman's Friend, will stand proudly behind Fleetwood Town in August as they take their place in the Football League, having run away with the Blue Square Premier title last season.

Their entry to the League swells the number of Lancashire coastal towns to three, the Shrimpers of Morecambe and the Seasiders of Blackpool being the other two. Southport FC once too belonged to the Lancashire coastal clubs' fraternity but the town was first chucked out of Lancashire and into Merseyside, much to their general dismay, and the football club were then demoted out of the League by an unsympathetic re-election committee in 1977, although they hover around the Conference.



Fleetwood's Highbury stadium

Already there is much debate about how Fleetwood will fare, given that the fanbase of the town itself is only 30,000, but the fact that Southport are still striving to regain their League status after 35 years shows the desire that football towns hold to have a club with their town's name on it in football's elite.

A quick glance at the Blue Square Premier shows a great raft of clubs who were fixtures in the League before there was automatic promotion/relegation to the Conference, as the Blue Square Premier used to be known: Cambridge Utd., Grimsby, Lincoln, Wrexham, Hereford. Some are distant memories in terms of League status, such as Gateshead, Barrow, or Newport, but Luton were complete strangers to the lower echelons until recently, even enjoying a decade in the top flight from 1982 to 1992.

Fleetwood have certainly hit the ground running in their efforts to make an impact on League Two, recruiting Northern Ireland international Damien Johnson and former Preston North End players Barry Nicholson and Jon 'The Beast' Parkin, a signing that has particularly delighted Fleetwood manager Mickey Mellon.

Speaking in a recent TV interview, Mellon said: "Jon will bring a huge presence up front. He's 6'4", good on the floor, and I'm sure he'll be a massive fans' favourite. We've already got a fantastic group but Jon will be a big asset. The first thing he said to me is 'Are you going to be successful? He comes here with a lot of ambition and I like that. We're not going to settle for making up the numbers in this league.'

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Sporting Books

Hands up any football fans who got a biography of one of the game's legends in last year's Christmas stocking and didn't read past the second chapter? Does that book now sit on the ledge in your loo? So often, major publishers pay big advances for superstars' stories but they're frequently disappointing and rarely worth the investment for the publisher.

Writer, editor and former Daily Express athletics correspondent Randall Northam's mission is to combat this. In 1995 he formed SportsBooks, with the aim of publishing a range of books on sport that are well-written and, in SportsBooks' estimation: 'deserve to be out in the marketplace'. Although many of them appeal to a niche market, they're either informative or entertaining or amusing, or sometimes all three.

Love Sport will publish a review of one of SportsBook's titles in each issue. We start with Scouting for Moyes, the story of former PNE scout Les Padfield.

TITLE: Scouting for Moyes

AUTHOR: Les Padfield

FORMAT: Paperback

ISBN: 9781899807956

PRICE: £8.99

All football clubs have them – scouts. Men (for they are almost always men) who watch teams to check how they play, who watch players to see how good they are. Even in these high tech days of video analysis and Prozone (a system which tells how far each player has run in a game, how many passes and how successful they were etc.) football clubs could not operate without the human element of scouting.

Les Padfield, though, is not your typical scout. Not many are published poets! A Londoner, he was a schoolboy footballer of great promise – as he writes, Harry Redknapp, the Spurs manager, used to provide the crosses for him to score when they were schoolboys. He chose though to become a teacher of Physical Education, English and other subjects. He became a scout when, having been persuaded to attend a match at Millwall he meets an old friend, John Sainty, the chief scout at Preston North End. Sainty tells Les that the club's manager, David Moyes, is looking for a London-based scout. And even though Les moved on to Bolton Wanderers in the Premier League, the title 'Scouting for Moyes' was too good to resist.

Les tells of the frustrations of the job, the perks – a trip to Nigeria to watch a teenage prodigy who revealed he preferred to study medicine – and the precarious nature of football life. Gary Megson, Bolton's manager who had also employed Les when he was in charge at West Bromwich Albion and Nottingham Forest is sacked at the end of 2009.

Les also offers the insight of a professional into the world of football, Surprisingly, his views are very often those of an outright fan. His royalties from the book will be donated to Cancer Research.

"...a little gem of a book. Padfield remains a glass-half-full man...a far more enjoyable read than any number of ghostwritten player biographies."

Simon Redfern, Independent on Sunday

"...humour and insight....very readable, entertaining and insightful."

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??Quick Quiz??

In honour of Royal Lytham hosting the Open for the first time since 2001, Love Sport's inaugural quiz is all about golf. Answers at the foot of Page 23.



- 1) Which American golfer won the British Open in 1998?
- 2) The holes at the Augusta National Golf Course are all named after what?
- 3) In which decade was the British Open Championship first held?
- 4) Why would hole No. 8 at the Troon Golf Course interest a philatelist?
- 5) Why did Ian Woosnam lose his temper with Miles Byrne in the 2001 British Open?
- 6) Which golfer was portrayed by Glenn Ford in the 1951 film, Follow The Sun?
- 7) Who was the first British golfer to win the US Women's Open?
- 8) Who, at the age of 46, is the oldest winner of the US Masters?
- 9) Which course staged the first British Open?
- 10) Which two Lancashire courses with the prefix Royal have hosted the Ryder Cup?

Okay, we'll have an Olympic quiz as well. Score five or six to get in a bronze medal position, seven or eight to gain silver and nine or ten wins you the gold. On your marks.....



- 1) What was the first city beginning with the letter M to host the Summer Olympics?
- 2) Eric Liddell, immortalised in the film Chariots of Fire, won an Olympic gold medal in which event?
- 3) In what event did Hilda Johnstone compete in the Olympics at the age of 70?
- 4) What is the nationality of the gold winning Olympian nicknamed Yifter the Shifter?
- 5) In which two cities did Sebastian Coe win Olympic gold medals?
- 6) At which event was Al Oerter crowned Olympic champion in four successive games?
- 7) Which Olympic year witnessed the controversial collision between Mary Decker and Zola Budd?
- 8) Which sport was contested at the 1988 Olympics for the first time in 64 years?
- 9) Which was the first Olympic Games to be televised?
- 10) Which city played host to the 1964 Summer Olympics?



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longtonssc.co.uk
online-bowls.com/index/league
broughton&districtclub.co.uk

BADMINTON

preston.inuklocal.co.uk/Leisure/citrusclub.org
preston.gov.uk/yourservices/sport-and-leisure-centres
lancashirebadminton.co.uk

MARTIAL ARTS

nippon.uk.org
prestonmartialarts.co.uk
shudokanpreston.co.uk
uksoobahkdo.org
redkitethaiboxing.co.uk

BOXING

boxingclasses.org.uk
labgc.org.uk
imagineboxing.com
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Quick Quiz answers: Golf: 1) Mark O'Meara 2) Plants 3) 1860s 4) Hole No.8 is known as the Postage Stamp 5) Miles Byrne was the caddie who put an extra club in Woosnam's trolley, costing him the title 6) Ben Hogan 7) Laura Davies 8) Jack Nicklaus 9) Prestwick 10) Royal Birkdale and Royal Lytham. Olympics: 1) Melbourne 2) 400 metres 3) Dressage 4) Ethiopian 5) Moscow and Los Angeles 6) Discus 7) 1984 8) Tennis 9) 1936 Berlin Olympics 10) Tokyo.



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