

History of equestrian events at the Games of the XXII Olympiad



Games of the XXII Olympiad Moscow (URS), 19 July – 3 August 1980

BOYCOTT

The 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow represented the lowest point in the history of the Olympic movement. The Games were disrupted by a boycott led by US President Jimmy Carter, part of a package of actions to protest against the December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Carter engaged in extensive arm-twisting to gain support from other nations. Some governments, like those of Great Britain and Australia, supported the boycott but allowed the athletes to decide for themselves whether to go to Moscow. No such freedom of choice was allowed US athletes, as Carter threatened to revoke the passport of any athlete who tried to travel to the USSR. In the end, 67 nations did not participate with 45 to 50 of these nations likely being absent because of the US-led boycott. Eighty nations did participate - the lowest number since 1956.

ONLY 11 NATIONS IN THE EQUESTRIAN EVENTS

Riders from only 11 nations took part in the equestrian events.

From the top equestrian nations, only Austria, with the reigning European Dressage champion, Sissy Theurer, and Italy with its Eventing team, went to Moscow. There were, furthermore, two Finns and eight Mexicans in Eventing and Jumping and a Jumping rider from Guatemala. The starting fields were complemented by riders from socialist countries along with four Indian Eventers in colourful uniforms who, in their high level international debut, were all eliminated.

The organising committee had built an impressive 45-hectare venue in the south western Moscow suburb of Bitsevsk, featuring a Jumping stadium for 12,000 spectators and a Dressage stadium seating 3,000.

Games facts & Figures

- **80** nations
- **5,179** athletes (1,115 women; 4,064 men)
- **21** sports
- **5,615** media (2,685 written press; 2,930 broadcasters)
- The Olympic Games were organised in a socialist country for the first time.
- **British duel:** British middle-distance runners Steve Ovett and Sebastian Coe, the future chairman of the London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2012, faced each other in a memorable confrontation. In the 800m, Ovett won the gold medal ahead of his compatriot. Six days later, a determined Coe redeemed himself in the 1500m. He took the gold, while Ovett managed only a bronze.

Equestrian facts & figures

- **11** nations (Austria, Bulgaria, Guatemala, Finland, Hungary, India, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Romania, USSR)
- **68** entries (26 in Jumping; 14 in Dressage; 28 in Eventing)

JUMPING (26 riders from 7 nations)

Ten thousand spectators watched the team competition in the equestrian complex of Bitsa. Six teams competed, of which none could be considered a top 10 team worldwide. The course designer was the former Soviet Nations Cup rider Viatcheslav Kartavski, who had built rather easy courses with inviting obstacles and no distance problems.

The individual competition, in front of 80,000 spectators in the Lenin stadium, had 16 starters. The Romanians chose not to participate, but there was one individual rider a piece from Finland and Guatemala. The Polish veteran, 38-year-old Jan Kowalczyk, on Artemor, won gold with one knock-down in each round. Nikolaj Korolkov, with 9.5 points, earned silver, and bronze went to Joaquin Perez de la Heras of Mexico, in a jump-off against Oswaldo Mendez of Guatemala.

Medallists – Individual

1. Gold	Jan Kowalczyk (POL)	Artemor
2. Silver	Nikolai Korolkov (URS)	Espadron
3. Bronze	Joaquín Perez d. I. Heras (MEX)	Alymony

Medallists – Team

1. Gold	Soviet Union	Nikolai KOROLKOV (Espadron), Viktor POGANOVSKY (Topky), Viktor ASMAEV (Reis), Viatcheslav CHUKANOV (Gepatit)
2. Silver	Poland	Wieslaw HARTMANN (Norton), Jan KOWALCZYK (Artemor), Marian KOZICKI (Bremen), Janusz BOBIK (Szampan)
3. Bronze	Mexico	Alberto VALDES (Lady Mirka), Gerardo TAZZER (Karibe), Jesus GOMEZ PORTUGAL (Massacre), Joaquin PEREZ DE LAS HERAS (Alymony)

DRESSAGE (14 riders from 6 nations)

The only foreign top rider performing in Moscow, Elisabeth Theurer on the 10-year-old grey Hannoverian Mon Chéri, clearly won the individual Dressage gold medal. Her decision to participate in Moscow had created considerable controversy in her native Austria – resulting in the resignation of the President of the National Equestrian Federation. In the Grand Prix the 26-year-old Sissi Theurer was 35 points and 82 points ahead of the two top Soviets, Yuri Kovshov and Viktor Ugriumov, respectively. In the Grand Prix Special, the difference increased to 90 and 136 points. Even without Elena Petushkova, who had lost her new horse Abakan due to illness, the Soviet team, with the record margin of 803 points, won team gold. Silver and bronze went to Bulgaria and Romania.

Medallists – Individual

1. Gold	Elisabeth Theurer (AUT)	Mon Chéri
2. Silver	Yuri Kovshov (URS)	Igrok
3. Bronze	Viktor Ugriumov (URS)	Shkval

Medallists – Team

1. Gold	Soviet Union	Yuri KOVSHOV (Igrok), Viktor UGRIUMOV (Shkval), Vera MISEVICH (Plot)
2. Silver	Bulgaria	Gueorgui GADJEV (Unimatelen), Svetoslav IVANOV (Aleko), Petar MANDAJIEV (Chtchibor)
3. Bronze	Rumania	Anghelache DONESCU (Dor), Petr ROSCA (Derbist), Dumitru VELICU (Dezebal)

EVENTING (28 riders 6 nations)

The participation of Italy brought some high level sport to the three-day event. Italy had been Olympic champions in 1964 and the Soviet Union had been, between 1962 and 1975, European champions on three occasions. The demands on endurance day were as follow:

A:	5,500m
B:	3,795m
C:	12,100m
D:	7,685m

The event was held in the Bitsa stadium and in the nearby Bitsa forest park. The ground was deep and muddy, but the obstacles were inviting. Of the 28 starters 11 were eliminated, including all the Indians. The Soviet Union won team gold ahead of Italy and Mexico. Federico Roman on the eight-year-old grey Rossinan took individual gold, ahead of three Soviet riders.

Medallists – Individual

1. Gold	Euro Federico Roman (ITA)	Rossinan
2. Silver	Alexander Blinov (URS)	Galzun
3. Bronze	Yuri Salnikov (URS)	Pintset

Medallists – Team

1. Gold	Soviet Union	Alexander BLINOV (Galzun), Yuri SALNIKOV (Pintset), Valery VOLKOV (Tzhetti), Sergei ROGOZHIN (Gelespont)
2. Silver	Italy	Euro Federico ROMAN (Rossinan), Anna CASAGRANDE (Daley), Mauro ROMAN (Dourakine), Marina SCIOCCHETTI (Rohan de Lechère)
3. Bronze	Mexico	Manuel MENDIVIL YOCUPICIO (Remember), David BARCENA RIOS (Bonbona), José Luis SOTO PEREZ (Quelite), Fabian VAZQUEZ LOPEZ (Cocaleco)