

History of equestrian events at the Games of the XXV Olympiad



Barcelona '92

Jocs Olímpics
d'Estiu de Barcelona 1992

Juegos Olímpicos
de Verano de Barcelona 1992

Jaux de la
25^e Olimpiada
de Barcelona 1992

Games of the
XXV Olympiad
Barcelona 1992

Games of the XXV Olympiad Barcelona (ESP), 25 July – 9 August 1992

Barcelona, home to 1.8 million people, was the host of Games of the XXV Olympiad and will be remembered for performances of the USA men's basketball 'Dream Team' open to all professionals and featuring superstars such as Magic Johnson, Michael Jordan and Larry Bird. Needless to say they dominated the entire Games.

HISTORICAL CHANGES

For the first time since 1972, the Games were boycott-free, due to important global political changes that had taken place in the years that followed the 1988 Games. Apartheid had been abolished in South Africa, which allowed the country to participate in the Olympic Games again, for the first time since 1960. Then there was the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of West and East Germany, as well as North and South Yemen.

Communism had ended and the Soviet Union was divided into 15 separate countries. The independent teams of Estonia and Latvia made their first appearance since 1936 and Lithuania sent its first team since 1928. The other former Soviet republics participated as a "unified team", although the winners were honoured under the flags of their own republics.

Yugoslavia was the subject of UN sanctions because of its military aggression against Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. It was banned from taking part in any team sports, but individual Yugoslav athletes were allowed to compete as "independent Olympic participants". Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina competed as separate nations for the first time.

LOCATION, LOCATION...

The equestrian events, with the exception of the Dressage and endurance phases of Eventing, were held at the Real Club de Polo de Barcelona, created in 1897.

The Parc del Remolar in downtown Barcelona had initially been proposed as the venue for the endurance part of Eventing. The golf and country club of El Montanya, one hour drive from Barcelona, was eventually selected. To make it easier for the horses, the Eventing-Dressage phase was held there too and as well as the second horse inspection.

Games facts & figures

- **169** nations
- **9,356** athletes (2,704 women; 6,652 men)
- **28** sports
- **34,548** volunteers
- **13,082** media (5,131 written press; 7,951 broadcasters)
- The IOC launched an appeal for the observance of the **Olympic Truce** for the first time.
- Spain's coxswain in the eights, **11-year-old Carlos Front, was the youngest competitor in the Olympic Games since 1900.**

Equestrian facts & figures

- **34** nations (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bermuda, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, , Colombia, Croatia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Netherland, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, USA, Virgin Islands)
- **217** entries (87 in Jumping; 48 in Dressage; 82 in Eventing)
- **Nicole Uphoff and Rembrandt** were the first combination to win the individual Dressage title in two consecutive Olympic Games.

JUMPING (86 riders from 29 countries)

The Jumping competitions had their drama such as Classic Touch's broken hackamore in the team competition. The elimination of Egano, the shocking second round of Milton, and the disappointing performance of Quito de Baussy in the individual final were all out of character. The obstacles, the courses and the qualifying system for the individual final were hotly discussed.

After the elaborate, beautifully built and decorated obstacles of Seoul 1988, the Spanish decided on something different and the two architects in charge of designing the 25 obstacles decided to use minimal figural and colour elements so as to better and more objectively define the difficulty of the obstacles. Needless to say, this new vision did not find many partisans.

After Seoul, with its two separate qualifying competitions, the FEI had decided to have three in Barcelona, but to use the two rounds of the team competition as qualifiers one and two. Since many of the top riders had accumulated enough points from the two team rounds, they either skipped the third qualifier or jumped only a few fences before retiring. As a result, only 44 riders finished the third qualifier whereas 28 did not start at all.

The reigning European champions, The Netherlands, also won Olympic team gold. Austria (16.75) and France (24.75) took silver and bronze respectively.

Ludger Beerbaum made up for his disastrous round in the team competition. Four riders went clear over course A: Beerbaum, Raymakers, Dello Joio and John Whitaker. Of those, Beerbaum and Classic Touch managed another clear in round B to clinch the gold medal. Piet Raymakers on Ratina Z had one quarter time fault and won silver, while Norman Dello Joio and Irish finished with 4.75 points to get bronze. John Whitaker and Milton had an unsettling refusal at the double oxer 4 a/b and could not recover finishing disappointing 14th on 19.25 penalty points.

Medallists – Individual

1. Gold	Ludger Beerbaum (GER)	Classic Touch
2. Silver	Piet Raymakers (NED)	Ratina Z
3. Bronze	Norman Dello Joio (USA)	Irish

Medallists – Team

1. Gold	Netherlands	Piet RAYMAKERS (Ratina), Bert ROMP (Waldo), Jan TOPS (Top Gun), Jos LANSINK (Egano)
2. Silver	Austria	Boris BOOR (Love me Tender), Jörg MÜNTZNER (Graf Grande), Hugo SIMON (Apricot D), Thomas FRÜHMANN (Genius)
3. Bronze	France	Hervé GODIGHON (Quidam de Revel), Hubert BOURDY (Razzia du Poncel), Michel ROBERT (Nonix), Eric NAVET (Quito de Baussy)

DRESSAGE (48 riders from 18 nations)

There were eight countries with four riders each, three countries with three and seven nations with one individual rider apiece. The Grand Prix test was seven minutes long, the Grand Prix Special 7½. Three horses did not pass the horse inspection, including the 16-year-old Corlandus which put a sad end to a great career.

Dressage in Barcelona was without a doubt, a German affair. In the Grand Prix their four riders took the top four positions and Germany, with the huge difference of 482 points over The Netherlands, won team gold. Two days later the three German riders allowed in the Grand Prix Special took all three individual medals. The United States won team bronze, finishing 99 points behind The Netherlands in silver.

Individually the battle was between Nicole Uphoff's Rembrandt and Isabell Werth's Gigolo, with Goldstern and Bonfire battling for bronze. In the 12 months leading up to the Olympic Games, Gigolo had better results than the defending Olympic champion, the 15-year-old Rembrandt. Gigolo had won the European championship in 1991 and the German championship in 1992. At the CDI O Aachen, a few weeks before the departure to Barcelona, Rembrandt had won the Grand Prix and Gigolo the Special. The 11-year-old Goldstern, ridden by Klaus Balkenhol, was third in the Special, 68 points ahead of the nine-year-old Bonfire ridden by Anky van Grunsven. After the repeat wins of Henry St-Cyr in 1952 and 1956 on two different horses it was the first double triumph of a combination.

Medallists – Individual

1. Gold	Nicole Uphoff (GER)	Rembrandt
2. Silver	Isabell Werth (GER)	Gigolo
3. Bronze	Klaus Balkenhol (GER)	Goldstern

Medallists – Team

1. Gold	Germany	Monica THEODORESCU (Grunox), Nicole UPHOFF (Rembrandt), Isabell WERTH (Gigolo), Klaus BALKENHOL (Goldstern)
2. Silver	Netherlands	Andy VAN GRUNSVEN (Olympic Bonfire), Annemarie SANDERS (Olympic Montreux), Tineke BARTELS (Olympic Courage), Ellen BONTJE (Olympic Larius)
3. Bronze	USA	Charlotte BREDAHL (Monsieur), Michel POULIN (Graf George), Robert DOVER (Lectron), Carol LAVELL (Gifted)

EVENTING (82 riders from 25 nations)

Due to a combined heat-humidity factor of 150, the Technical Delegate, Michael Tucker, decided to reduce the second roads & tracks from 11,110m to 9,000m and the steeplechase from 3,205 to 2,760m. Three minutes were added to the rest time after C.

The demands on endurance day were thus the following:

A	5,060m	
B	2,769m	7 obstacles
C	9,000m	
D	7,410m	33 obstacles

Seventy of the 82 starters finished the cross-country at EI Montanya, built by Wolfgang Feld. It was a course with many alternative routes, which were very time costly.

After the endurance phase, New Zealand was in the lead, despite the elimination of Welton Greylag ridden by Mark Todd, who had torn a ligament in the steeplechase. Great Britain was second, ahead of Australia and Germany.

Matt Ryan of Australia was in the lead individually, ahead of Andrew Nicholson, Herbert Blöcker, and Mary Thomson (future Many King), Ian Stark, who was later eliminated, and Vicky Latta. Andrew Nicholson on Spinning Rhombus and Mary Thomson on King William had unlucky Jumping rounds: the former had nine fences down, the latter had five. Matt Ryan and Herbert Blöcker won gold and silver respectively. New Zealand's Blyth Tait riding Messiah, who had been only 69th after Dressage, clinched individual bronze finishing on a clear Jumping round.

The Jumping phase rearranged the team order as Nicholson's bad round also affected the team placing: his 45 jumping penalties allowed Australia to overtake New Zealand by 2.20 points. Germany was third. Sixty-two of the 82 riders who had started the competition finished.

Medallists – Individual

1. Gold	Matthew Ryan (AUS)	Kibah Tic Toc
2. Silver	Herbert Blöcker (GER)	Feine Dame
3. Bronze	Blyth Tait (NZL)	Messiah

Medallists – Team

1. Gold	AUS	David GREEN (Duncan II), Gillian ROLTON (Peppermint Grove), Andrew HOY (Kiwi), Matthew RYAN (Kibah Tic Toc)
2. Silver	New Zealand	Andrew NICHOLSON (Spinning Rhombus), Vicky LATTA (Chief), Blyth TAIT (Messiah), Mark TODD (Welton Greylag)
3. Bronze	Germany	Matthias BAUMANN (Alabaster), Cord MYSEGAES (Ricardo), Ralf EHRENBRINK (Kildare), Herbert BLÖCKER (Feine Dame)