

# USC's OLYMPIC HERITAGE

As a 21-year-old graduate student, Emil Breitkreutz '06 might have been more comfortable strolling around one of the engineering exhibits at the 1904 World's Fair than he was running at Francis Field, where the track and field competition was held at the St. Louis Olympics.

But the running turned out pretty well, too.

Despite the onset of fatigue after an ambitious start to the men's 800 meters, Breitkreutz hung on to win bronze, becoming the first student-athlete from the University of Southern California to compete in, and claim a medal at, the Olympic Games.

With that, a tradition of excellence unlike any other in collegiate sports was born. Since Breitkreutz's debut, USC has produced more Olympians, more overall medalists and more gold medalists than any other university in the United States.

If USC were a country entering its athletes in the Olympic Games, its 309 all-time medals would place it 14th among participating countries. And in six different Olympics, USC's medal count would have positioned it among the top 10 competing nations.

Since 1904, there have been 451 athletes from USC who competed in the Olympics, and they have won 144 golds, 93 silvers and 72 bronzes. The first of those gold medals was captured in 1912, when Fred Kelly '16, a freshman from Orange, Calif., won the 110-meter hurdles at the Stockholm Games. Since then, at least one Trojan athlete has taken home the gold from every Summer Olympics, including the U.S.-boycotted 1980 Moscow Games.

USC Olympians have represented 64 different countries and have participated in 29 different sports, ranging from those generally associated with USC, such as track and swimming, to the more unusual, such as team handball, canoeing and bobsled.

While Trojans traditionally have found their place in the sun during the Summer Olympics, USC athletes also have competed in the Winter Olympics 10 times.

Three Trojan athletes have distinguished themselves by competing in multiple sports. Conn Findlay '54 won gold for rowing in Melbourne and Tokyo in 1956 and 1964, bronze for rowing in Rome in 1960, and another bronze for sailing in Montreal in 1976. In Melbourne in 1956, Robert Hughes (who attended USC from 1954 to 1957) helped the U.S. water polo team finish fifth and also competed in the 200-meter breaststroke — becoming the first American athlete since Johnny Weissmuller in 1924 to compete in two different sports during the same Olympics.

Wallace "Wally" Wolf '51, JD '57 competed in swimming at the London and Helsinki Games in 1948 and 1952, winning gold in London on the 4x200-meter freestyle relay team and going on to compete in water polo at the 1956 and 1960 Games in Melbourne and Rome.

There have also been three Trojans who have competed for multiple countries — volleyball player Terry Place Brandel (who attended USC from 1976 to 1977) played for the United States in 1980 and for West Germany in 1984; swimmer Björn Zikarsky '91 competed for West Germany in 1988 and for Germany in 1996; and water polo player Aniko Pelle '03 played for Hungary in 2004 and 2008 and for Italy in 2012.

But USC's presence at the Games goes beyond sheer numbers. The university has taken an active role in the Olympic movement, first with the staging of the 1932 Games in Los Angeles and again when the Games returned to the city in 1984.

USC began using the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, located directly south of the University Park Campus, as its football home in 1923. Nine years later, the Trojans would share the stadium with the best athletes from around the world.

By 1932, a two-phase reconstruction plan on the Coliseum was completed. The wooden upper decks were replaced with concrete and steel, and seating capacity was increased from 75,000 to 105,000. A new athletes' tunnel and lighting system were added, and the main entrance was adorned with Olympic rings and the Olympic cauldron. Because of his familiarity with the Olympic Stadium, USC graduate manager — now called athletic director — Gwynn Wilson was named associate manager for the 1932 Olympics.

USC played an even bigger role in the 1984 Games.

In fact, the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee (LAOOC) had a distinctly Trojan feel, with John Argue JD '56 — son of 1924 Trojan Olympian Clifford Argue '24, LLB '29 — serving as founding chairman. The committee also included among its ranks USC President James Zumberge, and acclaimed Hollywood producer David Wolper MFA '49 directed the opening and closing ceremonies.

USC's University Park Campus received a major facelift in preparation for welcoming the world to the greatest sporting event on Earth. Nearly half of the campus was leased to the LAOOC, serving as the largest of the city's three Olympic Villages. In addition, a new on-campus swim stadium hosted swimming, diving and synchronized swimming competitions, and Cromwell Track and Field Stadium (today's Cromwell Field and Katherine B. Loker Track Stadium) was used as a training and warm-up facility.

Once again, the Coliseum served as the Olympic Stadium, hosting the opening and closing ceremonies, as well as track and field competitions.

While the 1984 Olympics are remembered largely for Carl Lewis replicating Jesse Owens' 1936 feat of four gold medals in track and field, Mary Lou Retton's four gymnastic medals — including all-around gold — and Joan Benoit's victory in the first-ever Olympic women's marathon, the role of USC and the Trojan Family in staging these historic Games cannot be overestimated.

Nor to be forgotten are the generations of athletes who have shone on and off the Olympic stage in manners emblematic of the traits USC has long strived to instill in every Trojan.

Perhaps none was more courageous than Louis Zamperini '40, the legendary NCAA champion miler and 1936 Olympian who, as a World War II bombardier, survived 47 days lost at sea after his plane crashed into the Pacific Ocean and then summoned the wherewithal to endure two years of torture in a series of Japanese prison camps.

Few have been more faithful to their principles than Lillian Copeland '30, who set Olympic and world records with her gold medal in discus at the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics but chose to boycott the 1936 Berlin Games, forfeiting a chance to defend her title in protest of Adolf Hitler's exclusion of Jewish athletes from the German Olympic team.

Likewise not to be forgotten is scholarly diver Sammy Lee MD '47, who won gold medals in the 10-meter platform at the 1948 and 1952 Olympics, then went on to serve three years in the U.S. Army Medical Corps in Korea before opening his own practice in Orange County, Calif.

There have been arguably few athletes as skillful as Mexico's Rafael Osuna '63, a table tennis prodigy who retooled his game to become an NCAA champion in singles and doubles tennis at USC, a U.S. Open titlist and an Olympic gold medalist at the 1968 Mexico City Games.

And there is the ambitious track and field sprinter Allyson Felix '08, a four-time Olympian and nine-time medalist. She is the third U.S. woman to win at least six gold medals in any sport, and she has taken home more Olympic medals than any other female U.S. athlete in her field of competition. Her success in Rio in 2016 made her the Trojan career leader in total medals and gold medals.

Within these pages, you will find images, stories and firsthand accounts of these and scores of other men and women who, when faced with Olympic-sized competitions and obstacles, summoned the traits of a true Trojan and showed the world how to Fight On!

If USC were a country entering its athletes in the Olympic Games, its 309 all-time medals would place it 14th among participating countries. And in six different Olympics, USC's medal count would have positioned it among the top 10 competing nations. All told, 451 athletes from USC have competed in the Olympics, more than from any other U.S. university. They have taken home 144 golds, 93 silvers and 72 bronzes.



# USC's Storied Olympic History

BEGINNING WITH THE 1904 OLYMPIC GAMES, USC HAS PRODUCED MORE OLYMPIANS, MORE OLYMPIC MEDALISTS AND MORE GOLD MEDALS THAN ANY OTHER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY.

SINCE **1912** USC Trojans have won a gold medal at every Summer Olympic Games.

144 GOLD



93 SILVER



72 BRONZE



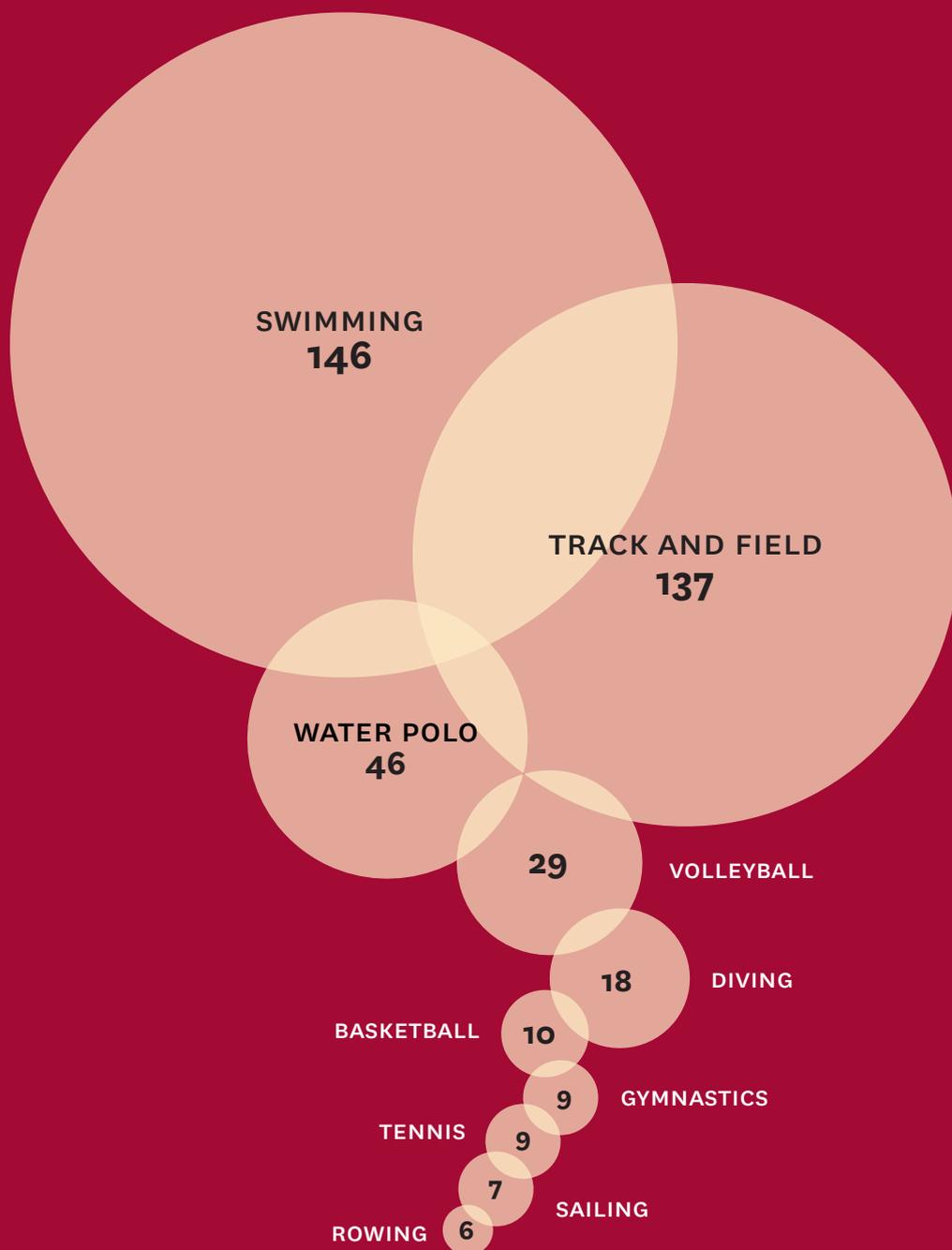
TOTALING  
*309 medals*

# USC OLYMPIANS BY SPORT

## GLOBAL REPRESENTATION

USC Olympians  
have represented  
64 different countries  
and 29 different sports.

If USC competed  
as a country,  
its 144 gold medals  
would rank it 13th  
in the world.



# BRINGING HOME OLYMPIC GOLD IN

# 2016

21 total medals were won by USC athletes  
at the Rio Games.