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GUIDE TO
THE OLYMPIC
AND SPORTS
MUSEUM
Joan Antoni Samaranch
This dossier is a museum guide which features basic explanations for teachers and activity leaders accompanying school groups and/or groups of adults and who wish to prepare the museum visit in advance.

A brief explanation and a reference point is given (the white lines on the floor on the Sports Ramp) in each of the museum areas, which allow the information to be looked up and the appropriate comment to be made. Most of these correspond to the themes highlighted in this guide.

The museum visit is approximately one hour long, though this will vary according to each visitor and the time dedicated to each space (see the interactive and audiovisual media, etc.).
Below is a theme-based table of contents which outlines, in a comprehensive and summarised fashion, much of the museum’s content:

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MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM

This room features the most outstanding events and heroes of the modern Olympics, as well as images and original objects from the latest editions of the Summer and Winter Olympics.

In parallel, motorcycling and motor racing champions have their place in the Motor Olympus space, a small tribute to the leading protagonists of these sports in our country: from Formula One to motorcycling and rallies.
Walking, running, jumping... the body is prepared to move. Human beings learned to run out of the need to survive. A feat that called for balance, coordination and efficiency.

The advent of agriculture, the domestication of animals and the discovery of the usefulness of minerals made human beings settle down in certain places and adopt a sedentary lifestyle.

Later on, the ongoing confrontation between different peoples would refine the art of war and this physical and defensive activity would eventually lead to physical-military activity which, subsequently, would give rise to the emergence of certain sports disciplines.

**MESOPOTAMIA AND MESOAMERICA 3000 - 1500 BC**

The Mayans’ *Pok-Ta-Pok* and the Aztecs’ *Tlachtli* bore a cosmic meaning. Men devoted their strength and, sometimes, their life, to the gods. The player that managed to hit the ball through one of the stone rings was entitled to demand public property in reward. Despite the excitement felt, a profound silence was kept out of respect for the competitors.

In this area you can see a reproduction of the *Codex Borbónicus*. 
Ramp 1

THE BIRTH OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES
776 BC

The civilisation of Ancient Greece saw the emergence of a new body culture and a system of advanced competition based on *agon* (struggle or contest), everything associated with “the drive to excel” and “the driving force of life’s creation”, which was also associated with aesthetics and reflection.

The virtues of physical activities were incorporated into the education programmes of various Greek polis. All these cities were equipped with gyms, arenas and athletic tracks where young people exercised their bodies under the supervision of trainers who, besides seeing to the boys’ athletic development, looked after the moral aspects of their training.

The Olympic Games were born in 776 BC. There were four Panhellenic Olympic Games, each in honour of a specific god and the place in which they were carried out: the Isthmian Games in Corinth, the Nemean Games at Nemea, the Pythian Games at the sacred mountain of Delphi and the Olympic Games in Olympia, in the region of Elis. The athlete who managed to win them all was deemed to be the great hero.
In 393 AD, with the arrival of the Roman Emperor Theodosius I, all pagan practices were forbidden because the Games were held in honour of mythological gods.

With the Romans, the idea of Greek competition was replaced by *ludi* (entertainment and spectacle), which brought people together around games involving risk, excitement and cruelty. The Latin phrase *panem et circenses* (“bread and circuses”) encapsulates the predilection of Roman society for having their belly full and being entertained, the emperor’s main instrument for controlling the behaviour of the populace.
THE MIDDLE AGES, 4\textsuperscript{th}-14\textsuperscript{th} c.

The West:
Social Body Practices

The Middle Ages represented a long, dark period for physical activities in the West, as the body was considered the bearer of man’s sin. Many of these activities are rooted in practices related to war and the defence of the populace. Noteworthy were knightly jousts and tournaments, skill-based physical activities (archery and crossbow) and traditional rural games (\textit{soule} and \textit{hurling}).

The East:
Spiritual Body Practices

China saw the advent of tai chi, the art of mediation in motion, and kung fu gymnastics. Archery was also understood as a spiritual physical exercise related to Taoism. In India, yoga techniques were linked to religious and philosophical systems, while in Japan, the samurai, on the basis of ancient martial arts and a code of honour, developed combat exercises such as kendo and jujitsu.

THE RENAISSANCE, 14\textsuperscript{th}-17\textsuperscript{th} c.

The importance of educating the body

The Renaissance opened up a new horizon for the recovery of the body as an integral part of the individual. Physical exercise and gymnastic practices began to be introduced into daily life as an investment in health, hygiene and culture. Doctors, humanists and philosophers claimed that the body needed to be educated. One of the main references is the book of the time \textit{La Casa Gioiosa}, by Vittorino da Feltre.
In the context of burgeoning sporting practices in Europe, one of the most prominent sports theorists and promoters was the French aristocrat Pierre de Fredy, Baron de Coubertin. His idea to restore the Olympic Games came to fruition in 1896, with the first Olympics in modern times held in Athens. This event ultimately gave way to the expansion and democratisation of sport worldwide.

**The Birth of Sport**

Between the 18th and 19th centuries, sport was defined as a regulated physical activity. This concept was born in England in the context of a society that needed to control and regulate traditional games.

**European Gymnastics**

During the 19th century, physical education at school emerged based on gymnastic exercises. The development of modern gymnastics in Europe led to three major trends: the German school, the Swedish school and the French school.

**THE RE-INSTATEMENT OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES, 1896**

In the context of burgeoning sporting practices in Europe, one of the most prominent sports theorists and promoters was the French aristocrat Pierre de Fredy, Baron de Coubertin. His idea to restore the Olympic Games came to fruition in 1896, with the first Olympics in modern times held in Athens. This event ultimately gave way to the expansion and democratisation of sport worldwide.
At the outset, the participation of women in the Olympic Games was not foreseen, just as the Games in Ancient Greece had not contemplated their inclusion either. During the 19th century, the social role of women was restricted to maternity, household management and care of the family. When women began to join public life and politics, they also made their way into the sporting field: their gradual participation in the Olympic Games, as of 1900, is an example thereof.

In the early 20th century, with the birth of mass society, sport was democratised and its expansion began. Football was to become the most popular sport.
Cycling was popularised as a sport once and for all thanks to Henri Desgrange, from the newspaper *L’Auto*, who came up with the idea for a six-stage race around France in 1903. The first Tour de France was won by Maurice Garin, a French chimney sweep that dominated the classics of the era.

The International Motorcycling Federation was set up in 1904. From that point on, motorcycles became increasingly more powerful and were adapted to the different categories established during the 20th century. Racing grew around tremendous rivalry, not only between drivers, but also between car manufacturers. Speed contests on closed and open circuits (urban) co-existed throughout the 20th century. The foremost category of this sport came into being in 1950: the Formula One Championship.
Ramp 1

**FIRST WINTER OLYMPICS IN CHAMONIX (FRANCE). 1924**

In 1924, the first Winter Olympic Games were held in the French town of Chamonix. Sixteen events in six categories (Nordic skiing, biathlon, bobsleigh, curling, ice hockey and skating) were organised.

Until 1992, the Winter and Summer Olympics were held the same year. As of 1994, the Winter and Summer Olympics began to be alternated every two years.

**SPORT AND COLONIALISM 1940**

As of 1940, the British colonies had initiated their process towards independence. Today they are first-rate sporting powers in the sports that the English introduced, such as cricket and horse-riding.
Sport, especially competitive sport, was the focus of the rehabilitation process spearheaded by the renowned neurologist Ludwig Guttmann for veterans of the Second World War that suffered spinal injuries with permanent disability. Soon, his hospital, the Stoke Mandeville Hospital in the British town of Alesbury, organised national competitions against other hospitals and clubs.

CAVING AND MOUNTAINEERING

Although it began as a science, the study of the underground world calls for extraordinary physical and mental preparation, as well as the mastery of sophisticated tools and techniques to move through terrestrial and underwater caves.

The desire to conquer the highest peaks has always existed in the history of mankind. Mountains commanded respect and fear, as they were considered the residence of the gods.
Chomolungma, “mother goddess of the universe”, is the Tibetan name of Everest, the roof of the world (8,848 m), named after the surveyor Sir George Everest. Edmund Hillary and the sherpa Tenzing were the first to conquer the summit in 1953.

In the mid-19th century, the ideal of the social modernisation of Catalan nationalism was linked to the introduction of European sports. Modern sport was born in Catalonia with the importing of models from Great Britain and, to a lesser extent, from Germany, France and Switzerland.

First sports, clubs and federations

The beginnings of sport in Catalonia mainly featured cycling, boxing, gymnastics, tennis, sailing and rowing.

Football acquired social significance with the establishment of the Palamós Football Club (1898), Fútbol Club Barcelona (1899) and the Royal Spanish Sports Club (1900).
Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympics and second President of the International Olympic Committee, visited Barcelona in 1926. Accompanied by the Barcelona elite, Coubertin visited the city’s sports amenities. After the visit, Coubertin affirmed, “Before coming to Barcelona, I thought I knew what a sporting city was.”

Following Barcelona’s failed attempt to host the Olympics in 1924, Coubertin’s praise and the construction of new stadiums encouraged Barcelona City Council to submit a bid to host the Olympics in 1936. However, the country’s political instability prompted the International Committee to choose Berlin. Nevertheless, Barcelona organised the People’s Olympiad in parallel, which did not come to fruition as a result of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War.

1964, TOKYO OLYMPIC GAMES, THE FIRST WITH COLOUR TELEVISION

The development of the media and transport led sport to take on a veritable international dimension. As of the 1960s, with the rise in television broadcasting, sport became a true spectacle for mass audiences.
They were the first to have a mascot and to use pictograms. What’s more, they also witnessed the consecration of a great swimmer: Mark Spitz. However, unfortunately, they would also be remembered as the Games of the tragedy.

The practice of rowing is age-old and examples can be found in ancient Egypt, Rome and Greece; but it was to develop as a sport in England in the 17th century. It had become a popular sport throughout Europe and the United States by the 19th century.

In 1980, rowers from Eastern Europe shone at the Olympic Games in Moscow and swept the rowing competitions.
The sport of sailing began in The Netherlands in the 17th century, and was quickly adopted by the English, who set up the first international competition: a regatta between an English and a North American schooner around the Isle of Wight: this marked the first America’s Cup.

Until 1983 America’s Cup had always been won by North-American yachts, but Australia put an end to this hegemony proclaiming themselves winners of the 25th edition.

In 1992, Barcelona became the world capital of sport thanks to the power of the media. The city watched the development of the most popular sporting events in the world in fascination.
THE VALUE OF DIFFERENCE

Paralympic Games

In 1988, the Summer Paralympic Games officially became part of the Olympic movement, and were held jointly with the Olympic Games.

The Games take place three weeks after the Olympics in the same city and in the same facilities. The first Paralympic Games became official in Seoul in 1988.

Adapted Sport

Adapted or inclusive sport is based on adapting sport for people who have some form of disability (motor, sensory or intellectual). They cover different areas such as school, recreation, therapy and competition. Two references mark its beginnings: the book entitled *Exercises for the Blind* (1847), written by the Austrian educationalist Klein, and the first Sports Programme for the Deaf (silent sport) which was carried out in Europe in 1847.

Special Olympics

In 1968, Eunice Kennedy Shriver founded the Special Olympics, which promoted the regular practice of specialised and adapted sports for people with intellectual disabilities. These Games are characterised by greater solidarity in which all the athletes are champions. The podium is unitary, without a second or third place, and they all receive medals.
SPORT FOR ALL

Sport evolved simultaneously with social and technical changes, and adapted to the needs and demands of its practitioners, which included all sectors of the population.

Concern over improving quality of life afforded great importance to sport and so-called “sport for all” became primordial for many people that did not wish to compete but did wish to engage in physical sporting activities of essentially a recreational and leisure nature.

At school, sport primarily played an educational and training role. Therefore, physical and sports practice was designed to achieve the benefits of motor development and learning corresponding to each stage of the child’s development.

HALL OF FAME

The Olympic Torch

The relay run by the Olympic Torch is one of the traditions that are upheld in tribute to the Ancient Olympic Games, and begins when the sacred flame reaches the cauldron in the stadium where the opening of the games is held. The first relay took place at the Berlin Games in 1936.

It is not always runners that transport the flame; there have also been swimmers, riders, skiers, etc. Planes, boats, motorcycles, cars and bicycles have been used.
Trophies

In the ancient Olympic Games, the prizes for champions were symbolic and consisted of olive and laurel wreaths. The winning athlete was proclaimed a hero and was received with honours and distinction in his city.

Olympic Symbols

Over the years, symbols which encompass the Olympic movement have been created. There are five symbols: the flag, the oath, the flame, the anthem and the motto.

“A la ville de Barcelona...”

In October 1986, Barcelona was named the host city of the Olympics by the President of the IOC, Joan Antoni Samaranch, who uttered the famous phrase: “A la ville de Barcelona”.

The Olympic Games were held from 25 July to 9 August, and the Paralympic Games took place from 3 to 14 September.

The planning of the Barcelona Games surpassed earlier editions, to the extent that the President of the IOC declared that Barcelona had organised “the best Games in the history of the Olympics” during the closing ceremony.

The Barcelona Games constituted a major step forward for the city and for sport in our country. They are also palpable in the city’s urban transformation and in the sports facilities bequeathed as a legacy.

The 15 sub-venues, built throughout Catalonia and some cities in Spain, are still in operation today.
More than 34,500 volunteers (setting a precedent in the history of the Games) contributed to the success of Barcelona, which had the support of the three administrations: the City Council, the Government of Catalonia and the Spanish Government, and with the major collaboration of private enterprise, creating a new organisational model that would later be applied by other Olympic cities.

Image and Design

Barcelona wished to make the most of the Olympic Games to show the tremendous creative capacity of its artists. From the spectacular opening and closing ceremonies, to seemingly insignificant objects, everything was designed especially for the Games. A creative effort that was recognised and admired all over the world.
Sports and Results

The results of the Spanish delegation were the best in its history, winning 22 medals. In the previous 77 years of competing, it had only garnered 27 medals: the success was the product of proper sports training of the selected athletes thanks to the Olympic Sports Association plan.

The opening ceremony was one of the most spectacular ever, starring the giant Hercules, a hero and athlete from Greek mythology who appeared running from one end of the stadium to the other. By way of pedals that transported the entire structure, it was moved by five people who, using a lever, moved the arms and legs.

Barcelona wished to make the most of the Olympic Games to show the city’s tremendous creative capacity. It bequeathed a sports, organisational and human legacy that was exploited and expanded upon by subsequent host cities of the Olympics.

As of 1994, during the time of Joan Antoni Samaranch’s presidency of the IOC, the organisation structure was changed and the Games went from both of them taking place the same year to being held every two alternating years.
The Joan Antoni Samaranch Space

“Que no s'apague mai la llama olímpica que brilla en tots vosaltres”.

“Que no se apague nunca la llama olímpica que brilla en todos vosotros”.

“Make your olympic flame inside of all of you never go out”.

Quotes in Catalan and Spanish.
J. A. Samaranch combined the practice of various sports (he was a noted roller-hockey player and coach). He was a sports journalist (special correspondent at Helsinki’52) and President of the Spanish Skating Federation, as well as being head of the Spanish delegation at several Games, as of Cortina d’Ampezzo in 1956.

He was appointed Councillor for Sport in Barcelona City Council (1955-1962), where he organised the 2nd Mediterranean Games, and was later appointed National Delegate of Physical Education and Sport (1967). In 1973, he was named President of Barcelona Provincial Council and, four years later, Spanish ambassador to the Soviet Union and Mongolia (1977), a time when he was already Vice-President of the International Olympic Committee, an organisation he joined in 1966.

Finally, from 1980 to 2001 he chaired the IOC.
Sport is a constant test of human capabilities. The athlete not only faces themselves and their rivals, but also defies the laws of physics. With the aid of technology, in recent times, the quest to be faster, more agile and more accurate has intensified. This space is a bridge between the past and the future of the evolution of technology as applied to sport.

You will find a small climbing wall that you can climb, a jumping test to compare yourself with the champions in each category, as well as the Batak, the game of reflexes with which Formula One drivers and soccer goalkeepers train.
At the end of this area is the Small Cinema, a space designated to films, comics, the press and graphics that have addressed sport over the course of time, both in Catalonia and in Hollywood. You can delve into the seventh art by means of a selection of films from the latest editions of the BCN Sports Film festival, promoted by the Barcelona Olympic Foundation and hosted by the museum every year. Film as you have never seen it before!

This area also plays host to the sailboat Fortuna, from the Dragon class event, with which King Juan Carlos I competed in the Munich Olympic Games in 1972 and which he donated to the city of Barcelona in November 2011.

In parallel, the front wall features the collection of paintings dedicated to the Olympic venues of the Barcelona’92 Games, undertaken by the painter Joan Abelló.
In the small auditorium, which is the room which leads to the museum’s exit (through the temporary exhibition space), an 11-minute audiovisual is screened which shows the different aspects of the entertainment provided by sport.

It is screened continuously in four languages: Catalan, Spanish, English and French.
HOW TO GET THERE

Metro: Plaça Espanya (L1 red line-L3 green line)
Bus: 55, 150
Bus turístic: South Route, blue
Bus Montjuïc turístic: 5th stop
Montjuïc cable car

Joan Antoni Samaranch Olympic and Sports Museum
Avinguda de l’Estadi, 60-08038 (Barcelona) (next to the Olympic Stadium)
Tel.: 93 292 53 79

FURTHER INFORMATION

Opening Times
Winter (October to March)
Tuesday to Saturday: from 10 am to 6 pm
Sundays and public holidays: from 10 am to 2.30 pm

Summer (April to September)
Tuesday to Saturday: from 10 am to 8 pm
Sundays and public holidays: from 10 am to 2.30 pm

Closed
Mondays, except public holidays
1 January, 1 May, 25 and 26 December

Free
18 May and 24 September

Audio guides
2 €

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